40TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

STAR TREK III

THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK

A COMPLETE FAN GUIDE

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

Terry Matalas on Picard, Legacy & More

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A COMPLETE FAN GUIDE TO

STAR TREK III

The Klingon Bird-of-Prey (right) was first featured in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*. Designed by Nilo Rodis from Industrial Light & Magic, the original model sold at auction in 2006 for $307,200.

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From left: DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, William Shatner and George Takei in *Star Trek III*. "One of the gifts from *Star Trek* was not just longevity but colleagues that became lasting friends," Takei told *The Guardian* in 2022.

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CELEBRATING STAR TREK

We're marking the 40th anniversary of the release of *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* with a look back at the pivotal feature film, and exploring what's to come for the record-breaking franchise.

It's been almost 60 years since the original *Star Trek* series debuted and changed the way we viewed science fiction—and ourselves. Before *Star Trek* arrived in 1966, sci-fi on TV was limited to anthology shows like *The Twilight Zone* and *The Outer Limits*, or family-oriented fare like *Lost in Space*. *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry created an optimistic vision for the future and built a franchise that has influenced our world in so many ways. The original series' on-screen diversity was groundbreaking for its time with George Takei's Sulu and Nichelle Nichols' Uhura changing the conversation about people of color in powerful positions. After her time as Uhura, Nichols went on to recruit the first women and people of color into NASA's astronaut corps. And that's just *The Original Series*.

Today, there are 11 unique *Star Trek* series in existence (with more coming soon), as well as 13 feature films, which shakes out to more than 800 hours chronicling the adventures of Starfleet, as the franchise continues to hold to Roddenberry's hopes for a better future. "We are breaking boundaries all the time and reflecting life as it might possibly be," *Picard* and *The Next Generation* star Patrick Stewart told fans at San Diego Comic-Con in 2022. "That is an admirable thing for any TV show to do."

2024 marks the 40th anniversary of the pivotal feature film *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, the moment *Trek* took its first steps to truly becoming a franchise. This year also sees the fifth and final season of *Star Trek: Discovery* wrap up the latest boundary-pushing chapter in the *Trek* saga. Meanwhile, fans eagerly await the third season of the smash-hit *Strange New Worlds*, and the animated series *Lower Decks* and *Prodigy* also have new episodes coming soon.

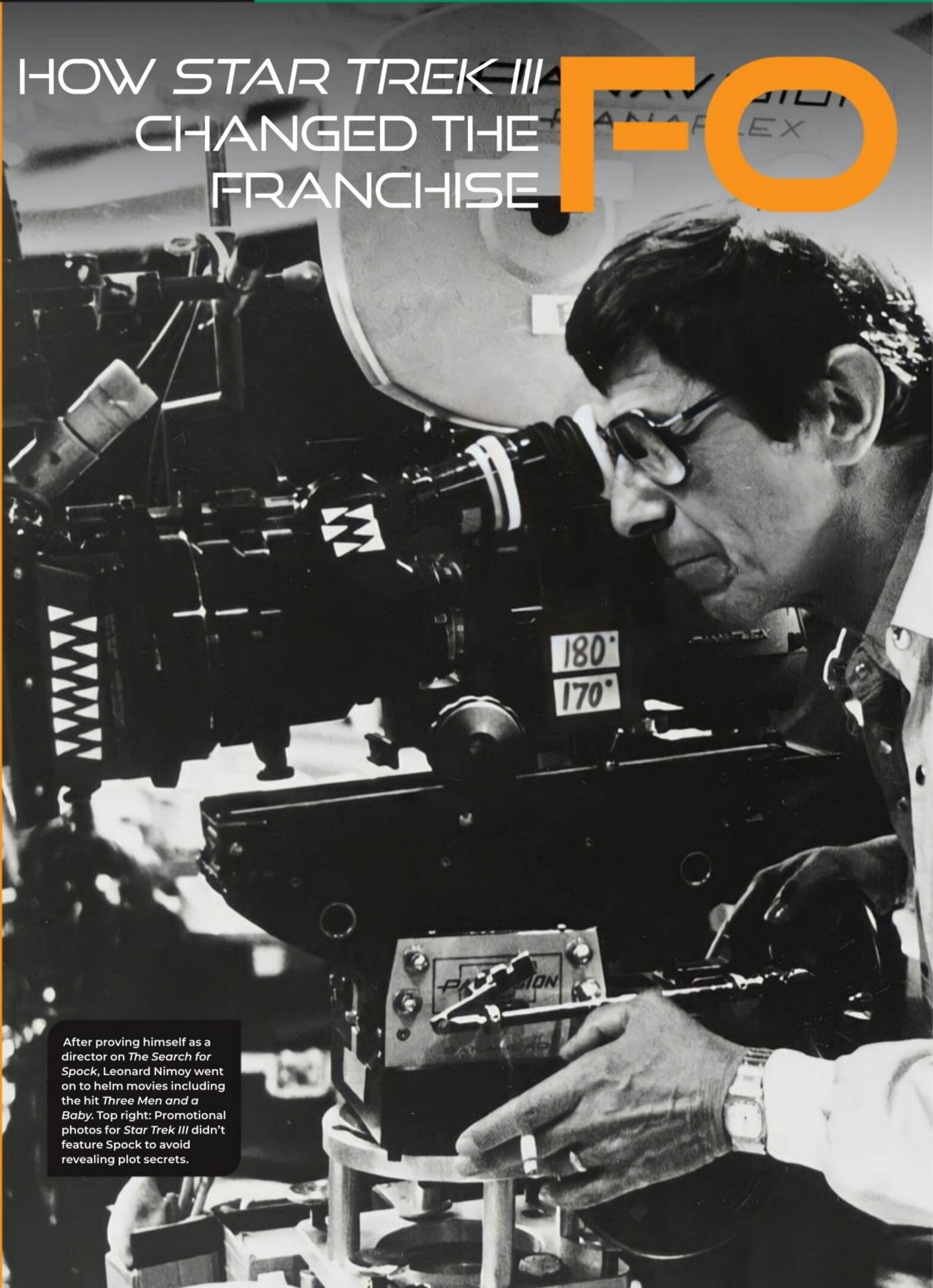
In these pages, you'll find an exclusive interview with Robin Curtis, who played Vulcan officer Saavik, looking back on her time on *The Search for Spock*. We also chatted with *Picard* showrunner Terry Matalas about crafting Season 3, how *The Search for Spock* influenced the show, and where things stand with *Star Trek: Legacy*.

We also look to the future of the *Star Trek* franchise, with the upcoming show *Starfleet Academy*, the new Michelle Yeoh stand-alone *Trek* movie, and the latest on not one but two big-screen feature films in development.

SSACHUSET
SLIM

Leonard Nimoy and William Shatner (pictured on the set of *Star Trek III*) had a turbulent friendship and didn't speak in the last few years of Nimoy's life. It's something Shatner wrote about in his book *Leonard: My Fifty-Year Friendship With a Remarkable Man*, noting that the rift was "one of my greatest regrets."

HOW *STAR TREK III* CHANGED THE FRANCHISE FO



After proving himself as a director on *The Search for Spock*, Leonard Nimoy went on to helm movies including the hit *Three Men and a Baby*. Top right: Promotional photos for *Star Trek III* didn't feature Spock to avoid revealing plot secrets.

REVER

When Leonard Nimoy stepped behind the camera to helm *The Search for Spock*, it led to a seismic shift. By Ryan Britt

Fans always cite *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* as one of the biggest aesthetic pivots for the franchise, and while that's true of the 1982 film, that pivot would have been somewhat meaningless if Star *Trek III: The Search for Spock* hadn't doubled down on the aesthetic, tone and magic that *The Wrath of Khan* laid down two years earlier. On both sides of the camera, the *Trek* franchise established traditions that would endure for the next four decades.

Today, Trekkies take for granted that some of the actors will take up the directorial duties. Several franchise stars, from LeVar Burton to Patrick Stewart to Avery Brooks, directed episodes of *The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, *Voyager* and *Enterprise*. And, of course, Jonathan Frakes famously helmed two *Star Trek* feature films, 1996's *First Contact* and 1998's *Insurrection*, and continues to direct *Trek* episodes to this day, including *Discovery* and *Strange*

From top: The Spacedock model was made out of clear plexiglass and then painted, with sections etched out to create the illusion of windows; from left: DeForest Kelley, Walter Koenig, William Shatner, James Doohan and George Takei. Nimoy admitted in a 1984 interview that the cast initially had concerns about him being the director, but he "really wanted them to be comfortable and make a contribution to the picture. I think it shows on the screen they had a good time."

New Worlds. However, this trend of *Star Trek* actors stepping behind the camera to direct actually began when Leonard Nimoy took the plunge and helmed *The Search for Spock*.

"They called me in for a meeting and said, 'We'd like to know if you'd like to be involved in another *Star Trek* movie,' and I said, 'Yes, I'd like to direct it.' And that's how that started," Nimoy told the Television Academy Foundation in 2010.

By taking control of the direction of a *Trek* movie, Nimoy didn't just make history; he changed the way *Star Trek* was made. Almost two decades in, the actors knew as much about their characters as any writer or producer, and so, in this third film, the personalities and talents of the entire cast of *Star Trek: The Original Series* were showcased as an ensemble, uniquely, for the first time on the big screen. We think of the *TOS* crew as a family, but *The Search for Spock* was the first of the *Trek* movies that let them behave that way. With one of their own taking creative control of the movie, the *Trek* family grew closer.

But it wasn't just the original cast and future *Trek* casts that were impacted by *The Search for Spock*. The *Star Trek* universe itself was changed forever by this movie. It was in this film that the Klingons were more firmly established, creating mythology and lore that continues to this day. The famous Klingon knife, the d'k tahg, was introduced in this film, as was the iconic Klingon spaceship, the Bird-of-Prey. The Klingon language, which was invented by Marc Okrand for *The Motion Picture*, was given a major overhaul for *The Search for Spock*, the first *Trek* film at that time that featured extensive scenes in which characters speak in the fictional language. (Kirk even saves the day by uttering a little bit of Klingon!) Today, the Klingon language is easily the most famous and widely spoken fictional language, with some fans, who don't speak the same Earth language, connecting via Klingon words. But had *The Search for Spock* not happened, when would the Klingon language have been reborn?

On the Federation side of space, Industrial Light & Magic—famous for *Star Wars*—returned to provide visual effects for the second *Trek* film in a row, having previously worked on *The Wrath of Khan*. But with *The Search for Spock*, ILM easily topped its previous work. Not only did this film feature the epic—and heartbreaking—destruction of the USS *Enterprise*, but it also introduced a slick, and iconic, aesthetic to all of Starfleet. The USS *Excelsior* was introduced in this film; a shooting model created by ILM would go on to appear in countless episodes of *The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine*, often as other starships.

In 1994's *Generations*, the *Excelsior* model was modified to become a new version of the *Enterprise*, and in 1991's *The Undiscovered Country*, it became the ship captained by Hikaru Sulu (George Takei). Additionally, David Carson and Nilo Rodis at ILM created the iconic Spacedock, a space-borne structure so big that the *Enterprise* and various other starships actually fit inside it. This design proved even more enduring than the *Excelsior*, and versions of this Spacedock have appeared in nearly every single version of *Star Trek* since, most recently in *Star Trek: Lower Decks*, and extensively in the critically acclaimed third season of *Star Trek: Picard*.

From the ships to the costumes to the phasers, space stations, Klingons and the surface of the planet Vulcan, *The Search for Spock* created a rich visual palette for *Star Trek*. And although much about *Star Trek III* was brand-new, it was all presented organically, and effortlessly.

The Search for Spock was a radical *Trek* film that took massive risks at the time but was destined to become a cozy, warm sci-fi classic. It didn't break the *Star Trek* mold, nor did it reinvent *Star Trek* outright. Instead, *The Search for Spock* added to the *Trek* mythos and visual language in a way that didn't seem possible before. The vastness and specific coolness of Starfleet and the future-tense galaxy may have been hinted at before in the franchise, but *The Search for Spock* was, in many ways, the first time that *Star Trek* truly went where it had never gone before. 🖖

Below: Shatner admitted in the 1995 book *Captain's Log: The Unauthorized Complete Trek Voyages* that there was some awkwardness on the set at first with his new director. "Leonard and I are the dearest of old friends," he explained. "Now, suddenly, my 'brother' was saying, 'Well, you should do this and I think you should do that.' There was an awkward period of time for me, although I don't think for Leonard, where I felt alone in anything I might have objected to.... But that slowly erased itself."

NOT EVERYONE WAS HAPPY

In his second memoir, *I Am Spock*, Leonard Nimoy recalled his relationship with co-star William Shatner as being "like a pair of very competitive brothers." So when Shatner, who played Captain Kirk, heard that Nimoy was set to direct *Star Trek III*, the actor who played Spock recalled that Shatner walked into a preproduction meeting for the film and declared, "I want nothing to do with this script." Shatner, meanwhile, remembered things a little differently, writing that he was "thrilled" over the news. "Years earlier, Leonard and I had added a 'most favored nations' clause to our contracts that said, essentially, that whatever one of us got, the other one had to be treated to equally. I have no memory of negotiating that. I just woke up one day, and we had a favored nations clause. That meant if Leonard got to direct a film, I would get to direct the next one," Shatner recalled. He would go on to helm *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*, which got mixed reviews and, according to the film's producer Ralph Winter "almost killed the franchise."

SHOOTING THE FILM

Director Leonard Nimoy worked hard to ensure that the story in *Star Trek III* lined up with his vision for a true ensemble film. By Ryan Britt

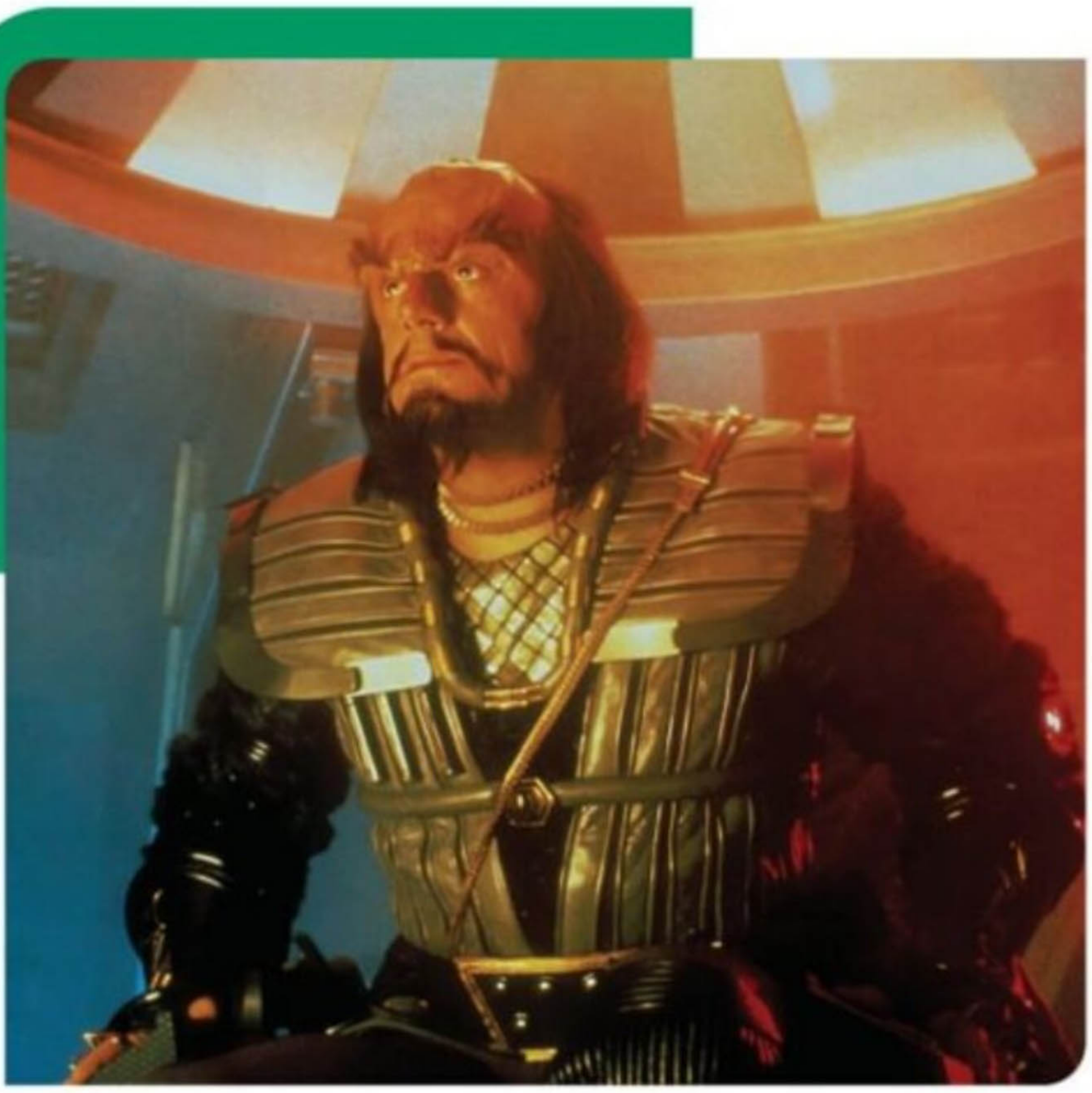
Star Trek III: The Search for Spock began filming on Aug. 15, 1983, on Stage 9 at Paramount Studios in Hollywood. Since 1977, these stages had held sets for the USS *Enterprise* and other starship interiors, which were initially created for an ill-fated *Trek* TV series that eventually materialized as *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* in 1979.

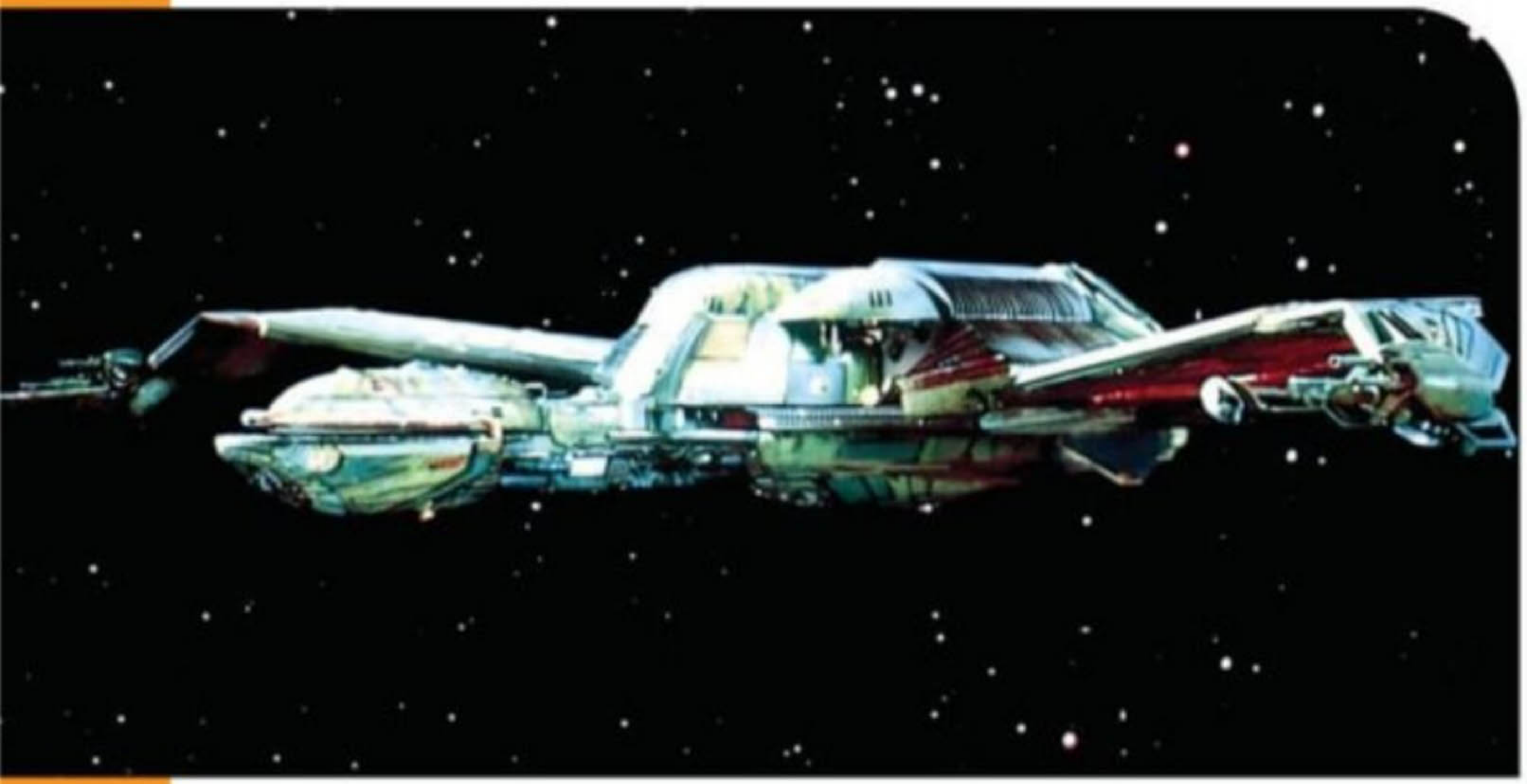
For the most part, the movie-era *Enterprise* bridge was unchanged in the third film, even though this was to be the final on-screen appearance of the famous fictional spaceship. To get ahead of leaks and spoilers that plagued the production of *The Wrath of Khan*, producer Harve Bennett and director Leonard Nimoy decided to spoil the movie ahead of time. So, they stuck the destruction of the *Enterprise* into the first trailer for the movie, trumpeting in all promotional material that this would be "the final voyage of the Starship Enterprise." Fans were, of course, shocked and worried. How can you have *Star Trek* without the *Enterprise*? Was this the end of *Star Trek*?

Despite the edgier aspects of the film, including the theft of the *Enterprise*—and it being the first *Trek* movie in which the cast spent most of their time out of their famous Starfleet uniforms—Nimoy's goal with *The Search for Spock* was to bring the family back together. In directing this movie, the actor who played Spock brought

The part of Saavik in *The Wrath of Khan* was Kirstie Alley's (near right) first acting role, but she told startrek.com that she passed on returning for *Star Trek III* because she was offered "less money for a bigger role." Alley was replaced by Robin Curtis (far right).

During filming, there was a fire on the Paramount lot, but Leonard Nimoy (standing, second from left) kept shooting. "The fire department and police department helicopters were circling overhead and we were having trouble getting our dialogue," the director recalled in a 1984 interview.





the camaraderie of the *Enterprise* crew back in a way the previous two films hadn't managed to do. The truth was, although Sulu (George Takei), Uhura (Nichelle Nichols), Scotty (James Doohan), Chekov (Walter Koenig) and Bones (DeForest Kelley) all got moments in *The Motion Picture* and *The Wrath of Khan*, Nimoy felt those films were about Kirk (William Shatner) and Spock, while *The Search for Spock* would showcase each cast member more thoroughly. If you think that both of Nimoy's *Trek* films—*The Search for Spock* and 1986's *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*—feel like the gathering of a family-esque team, you're right. And this was by design.

"We worked, very consciously, to define special moments for each of the *Enterprise* bridge crew," Nimoy later recalled in his 1995 memoir, *I Am Spock*. "I think I was influenced by my experience on [the TV series] *Mission: Impossible*, where each character had a specific job to complete in any given adventure."

After the original *Star Trek* ended in 1969, Nimoy co-starred in the spy adventure TV show *Mission: Impossible* as master of disguise Paris the Great. And although Nimoy eventually left the role, the sense of completing a big covert mission—or a heist in this case—helped to inform the overall structure of *The Search for Spock*.

Nimoy was particularly keen to make sure Nichols' Uhura was given a heroic moment to shine. "We felt it was long overdue to show her character really taking charge of a situation," he said, which led to the epic moment in which Uhura pulls a phaser on an upstart young officer, "Mr. Adventure" (Scott McGinnis).

The original cast wasn't alone for this adventure, however. A year before he was Doc Brown in *Back to the Future*, Christopher Lloyd terrorized the USS *Grissom* and USS *Enterprise* as the quintessential mad Klingon commander, Kruge. Spock's stalwart Vulcan prodigy Lt. Saavik was back for *Star Trek III* also, but after salary negotiations broke down between Kirstie Alley and producers, it was decided that the part of Saavik would be recast. Enter Robin Curtis, a newcomer to the *Trek* franchise who would go on to appear in *The Voyage Home* as Saavik, as well as two episodes of *The Next Generation*, playing a Romulan named Tallera. By the end of *The Search for Spock*, Saavik is implicitly part of the *Enterprise* crew's conspiracy, by virtue of the fact that she wants Spock to be reborn, too.

But why is Uhura pulling a phaser on an officer? Why did the *Enterprise* get blown up? And why is the movie called *The Search for Spock*? Ultimately, Nimoy and Bennett decided the film would showcase the crew of the *Enterprise* willing to sacrifice everything to reunite Spock's katra (his soul) with his rejuvenated body, which, as it turned out, had survived his burial in space at the end of *The Wrath of Khan* and been regenerated thanks to the Genesis device.

"I wanted the emotions to be very large, very broad, life-and-death themes...and the [look of the film] and everything about it derives everything from sizable characters playing out a large story on a large canvas," Nimoy said in director's commentary for the film's DVD release.

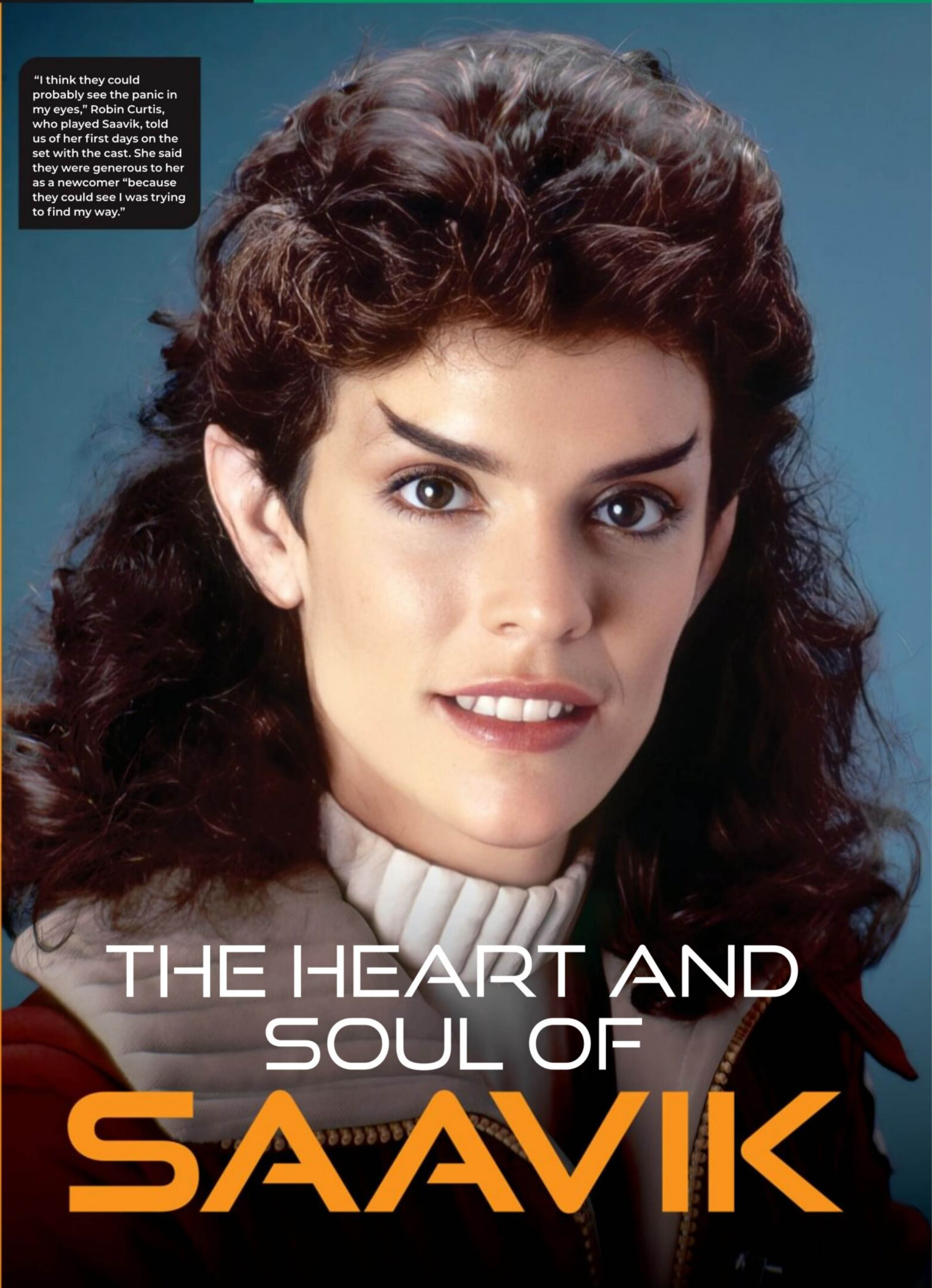
Although *The Wrath of Khan* director Nicholas Meyer was asked to return for *The Search for Spock*, he worried that he couldn't do justice to a movie about "resurrection." During the filming of *Star Trek II*, Nimoy and Bennett conspired to put one detail into that film that would leave a door open for Spock coming back. And so, the moment when Spock said "remember" and briefly mind-melded with Bones at the end of *The Wrath of Khan* set up the storyline of *Star Trek III*. While it cost the life of Kirk's son, David Marcus (Merritt Butrick), and the crew their careers and their ship, Spock did return in the end, because although his name was in the title, Nimoy's actual appearance at the end of the movie was kept a secret.

The film received mostly positive reviews when it was released on June 1, 1984, with the *Los Angeles Times* writing that despite the effects-laden battle scenes and destruction of the *Enterprise*, *The Search for Spock*'s "humanity once again outweighs the hardware, and its innocence is downright endearing." The movie was also a hit at the box office, grossing more than $87 million worldwide.

Although *The Search for Spock* is often considered a "middle" movie of a trilogy (comprising *Star Trek* II, III and IV), Nimoy's direction and the depth of feeling he injected into the scenes allowed for this film, at the time, to give the *Trek* family a happy ending. "My feelings about *Star Trek* and my feelings about Spock, my feelings about these characters in this show are on the screen and I really feel very good about it," Nimoy said in an interview prior to the film's release.

In 1984, nobody knew what would happen to the characters next, or if there would be another film. But it didn't matter. They were all back together again.

Clockwise from top left: Christopher Lloyd was not the first choice to play Klingon Kruge—Nimoy wanted Edward James Olmos; DeForest Kelley got expert instruction on doing the Vulcan nerve pinch; "You wanted adventure? How's this?" Nichelle Nichols told the junior officer as she pointed a phaser at him; Harve Bennett would later clash with Nimoy when they made *Star Trek IV*; the visual effects team experimented with a few different looks for the decloaking of the Bird-of-Prey.



"I think they could probably see the panic in my eyes," Robin Curtis, who played Saavik, told us of her first days on the set with the cast. She said they were generous to her as a newcomer "because they could see I was trying to find my way."

THE HEART AND SOUL OF SAAVIK

As the second actor to play Vulcan Lt. Saavik, Robin Curtis set the standard for generations of Vulcans. She talks exclusively to Ryan Britt about her *Star Trek* experience.

In the entire history of *Star Trek*, there is only one actor who was cast by Spock actor Leonard Nimoy to play a fellow Vulcan. And that person is Robin Curtis. In the role of Lt. Saavik in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, Curtis was in the unenviable position of having to follow a performance by Kirstie Alley as the same character in the previous *Trek* film, *The Wrath of Khan*.

When Alley's reps reportedly asked for more money than even DeForest Kelley was getting as Bones, producers decided that a new Saavik had to be found. Because a major character had never been so obviously recast before, some might have expected Trekkies to lose their minds, but when interviewed by *Starlog* magazine in 1984, Robin Curtis revealed the truth about the majority of *Star Trek* fans: They're usually very open-minded. "I got my first fan letter even before we started filming," she said. And that letter was from the Kirstie Alley Fan Alliance. "It was really very kind."

Forty years later, Robin Curtis is still very proud to have stepped into this half-Vulcan, half-Romulan heroine's boots, and only has one regret in filming *The Search for Spock*. "I wish I'd kept a diary," she told us in a new, exclusive interview. "That was advice I got from Walter Koenig, he said to keep a diary. I wish I'd listened!"

Because most of Saavik's scenes in *The Search for Spock* are with Kirk's son, David Marcus (Merritt Butrick), or the various regenerated younger Spocks, you might think Curtis could have felt isolated from the rest of the original *Star Trek* crew. "It was just the opposite," she said. "These people really demonstrated to me just how unpretentious, kind and gracious one actor could be to another. DeForest Kelley hugged me at the liftoff party. George [Takei] and Walter were always there for me. And Jimmy [James Doohan], I mean, who could be more friendly and flirtatious and playful? It was wonderful to behold."

Curtis did feel isolated from William Shatner, however, but noted that any sense that the actor was prickly on the set, she now realizes, was likely a result of him filming two projects at once (he was also shooting the TV series *T.J. Hooker*). "Given the greater context since then, I now know, he had his foot in two projects and was under a great deal of pressure," she explained. That said, Curtis did share a laugh with Nichelle Nichols when she confided to her that she was worried Shatner never looked at her when they were shooting a scene. "Nichelle was great, she said, 'Oh, honey, I've been acting to Bill Shatner's nose for years!'"

Despite any stress on the set at the time, Curtis has nothing but kind words for all

Above: Merritt Butrick, who played Captain Kirk's son, David Marcus, told Curtis that he and Kirstie Alley (who portrayed Saavik in *The Wrath of Khan*) had established "a flirtation" on-screen between their characters, but Curtis admitted to us that "there wasn't a lot of room for flirtation" between their characters in *The Search for Spock*.

of her *Trek* co-stars, including Shatner, and is very hopeful for a *Search for Spock* reunion in person. "I think we should all get together!" she told us. She also shared a lesson she learned from Majel Barrett, who played roles in a number of *Star Trek* series and was the wife of creator Gene Roddenberry: "She taught me that once you're a part of this franchise and a part of the *Star Trek* family, you tell the good news, you spread the good news. You have a good word about it."

Curtis remembers Leonard Nimoy most fondly, since, as the director of *The Search for Spock*, he worked with her more closely than any other member of the original *Trek* family. "He just had a way of getting close to everything, but not interfering. Not manipulating, not rocking the boat, but just being present and very clear in his vision," Curtis recalled. "I can't speak highly enough of any of them. I wish there was some drama. There just isn't any!"

After *The Search for Spock*, Curtis appeared once more as Saavik in 1986's *The Voyage Home*, and then returned in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* in the role of a Vulcan named Tallera in the two-part episode "Gambit." She also nearly snagged the role of Worf's Klingon love, K'Ehleyr, but it went to Suzie Plakson because of scheduling issues.

Curtis would go on to appear in *Babylon 5*, *Night Court*, *MacGyver* and *The Equalizer* and played the role of Jacqueline Kennedy in the film *LBJ—The Early Years*. Later this year, she'll be seen in the horror-thriller *Awaken the Reaper* with Lance Henriksen and Louis Gossett Jr.

But Robin Curtis' *Star Trek* legacy endures, four decades on, not just in the roles she played, but also in all the Vulcan women who came after her. From Jolene Blalock as T'Pol in *Enterprise* to Stephanie Czajkowski as T'Veen in *Picard* and Gia Sandhu as T'Pring in *Strange New Worlds*, generations of Vulcan women follow in Curtis' footsteps.

And yet, as humble as her Vulcan counterpart, she dismisses her influence on *Trek* lore and instead praises the actors working today. "I love Ethan Peck in *Strange New Worlds*," she told us with a smile. “Ethan Peck went to a whole new level. And Gia Sandhu, as T’Pring! Wow, those episodes are hot. I love their work together as a couple in the series.”

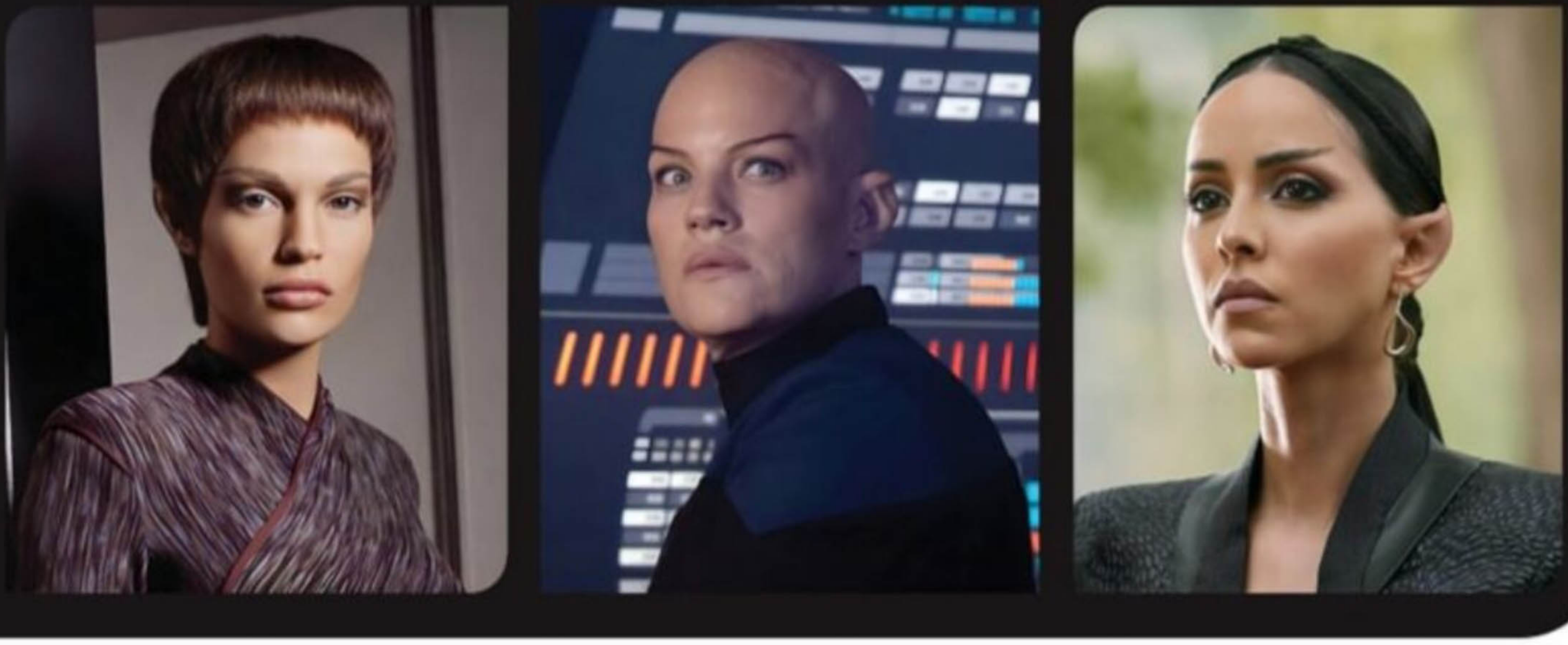
Now, as *The Search for Spock* celebrates its 40th anniversary, Curtis finds the movie to be warmer and more life-affirming than perhaps it was perceived at the time.

“I used to think *Star Trek III* was a sad movie. I thought: Everything dies. The ship dies. Spock is dead at the beginning. David dies. Illusions die. Genesis dies,” she explained. “I thought it was a movie about death.” But, now, Curtis believes the film is more of a family reunion than anything, and ultimately a *Trek* adventure that stands on its own. “Shame on me that I waited years to go back and watch it and realize—oh, my God, it’s so much fun! It’s so funny. It is warm. And it does have a wonderful, happy ending.”

Clockwise from top left: Curtis played Saavik again in *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, which she described as “a feel-good movie”; her journalist character was rescued from South America by Richard Dean Anderson in the first season of *MacGyver*; she played an Abbai ambassador in *Babylon 5*; and appeared in the original *Equalizer* series in 1986; Curtis returned to the *Star Trek* franchise in 1993 as a Romulan in *The Next Generation*.

THEY DON'T MESS AROUND

Lt. Saavik (portrayed by Kirstie Alley and Robin Curtis) was the first female Vulcan officer we got to know in the *Star Trek* universe, but she paved the way for a string of strong-minded, no-nonsense Vulcan women in the franchise, including (from left) T’Pol (Jolene Blalock) in *Enterprise*, T’Veen (Stephanie Czajkowski) in *Picard*, and T’Pring (Gia Sandhu) in *Strange New Worlds*.



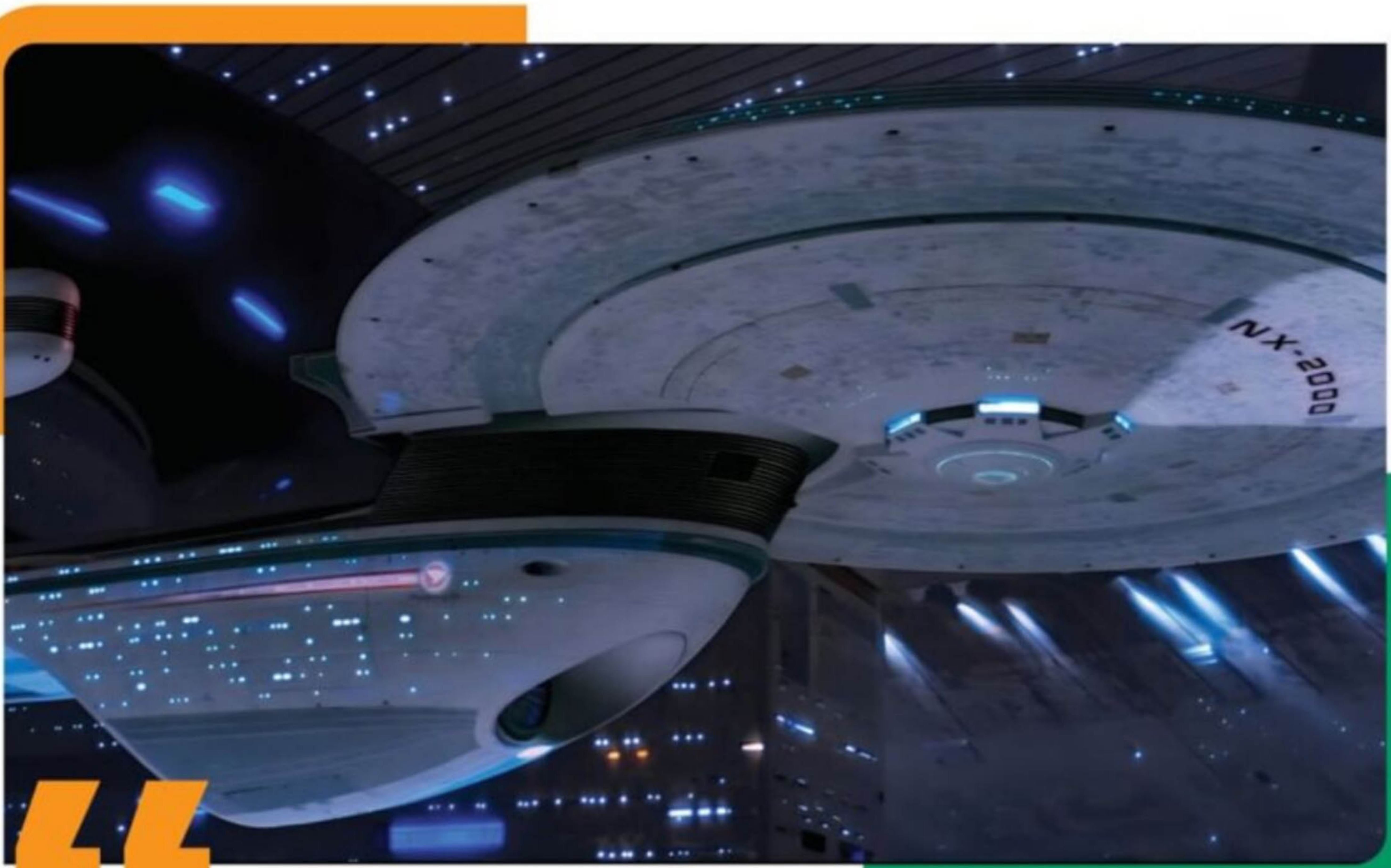
THE GENESIS OF TERRY MATALAS

The showrunner of *Star Trek: Picard* talks exclusively to Ryan Britt about how 1984's *The Search for Spock* changed his life and influenced the triumphant *Next Generation* comeback.

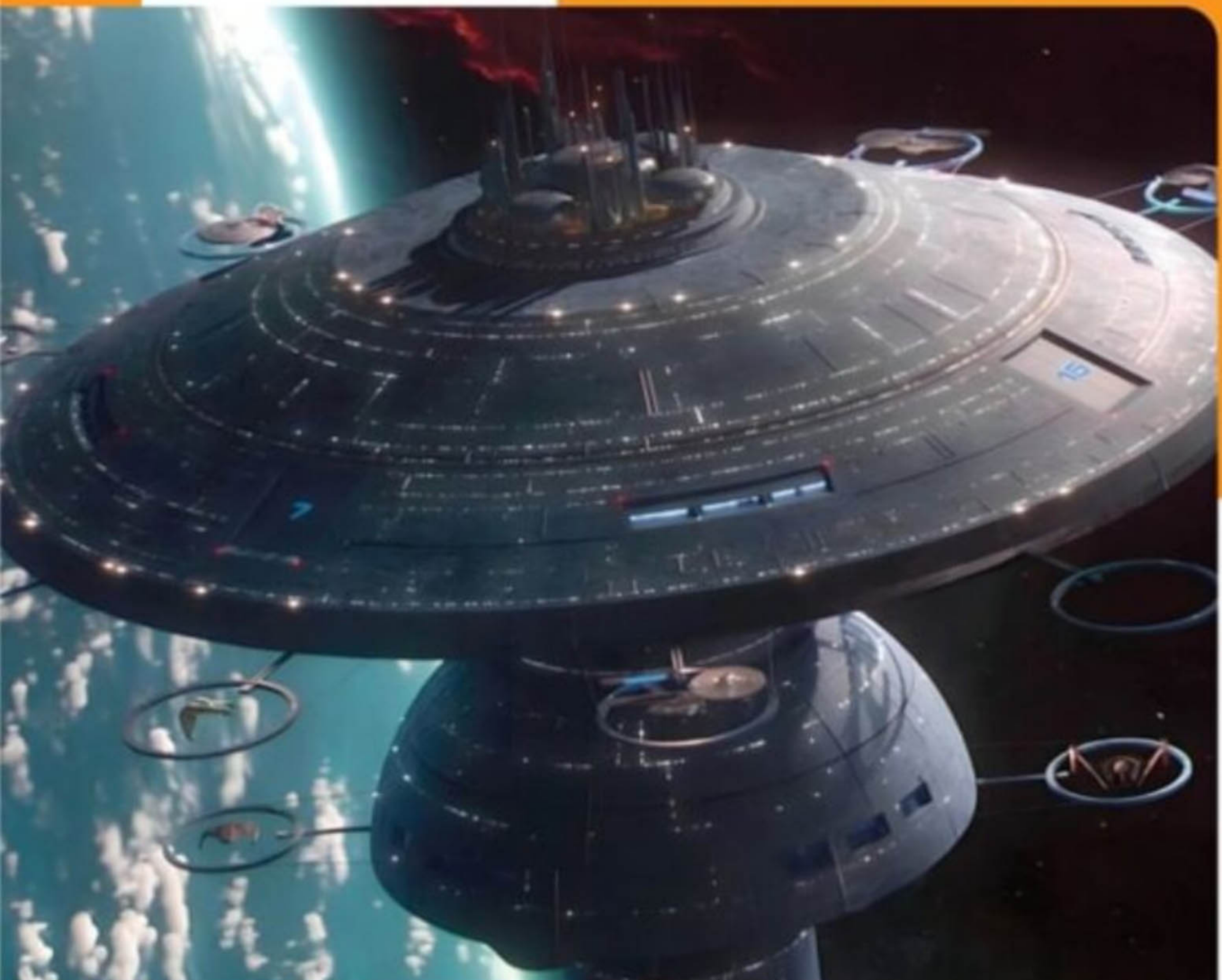
Terry Matalas and the *Next Generation* cast on the set of Season 3 of *Picard*. Front row, from left: Jonathan Frakes, LeVar Burton, Patrick Stewart, Gates McFadden, Marina Sirtis. Back row, from left: Michael Dorn, Matalas, Brent Spiner.

Back in 1984, when *The Search for Spock* was released in theaters, Terry Matalas was 8 years old. And like many fans who came of age in the '80s and '90s, the classic *Star Trek* films, starring the original cast, left a big impression. For Matalas, that fandom eventually resulted in his initial career choices. For the final two seasons of *Star Trek: Voyager*, Matalas worked as a production assistant for showrunner Brannon Braga, and he continued working for the *Trek* franchise for all four seasons of *Enterprise*, co-writing two episodes of that series.

After *Enterprise* was canceled in 2005, Matalas' career went from strength to strength. He most notably spearheaded the acclaimed SyFy channel reboot of *12 Monkeys*, a time-travel drama that



“I REMEMBER VIVIDLY THE *ENTERPRISE* PULLING UP TO SPACEDOCK. . .IT LEFT SUCH AN IMPRESSION ON ME.” TERRY MATALAS, ON *STAR TREK III*



teamed him up with several genre legends including *Back to the Future*’s Christopher Lloyd and *Battlestar Galactica*’s James Callis. But, for fans of *Star Trek*—who maybe missed *12 Monkeys*—a few actors from that series crossed over to *Star Trek: Picard* for Season 3, including Todd Stashwick, Aaron Stanford and Kirk Acevedo. And in some ways, the success of *12 Monkeys* primed Matalas for his return to *Trek* with *Picard*’s fan-favorite final season. “I’d love to do something like *12 Monkeys* again,” Matalas tells us in an exclusive interview. “You don’t get many bites of that apple; time travel, horror, quasi-fantasy and romance all in one. It was very special.”

While Matalas hopes to work with genre sci-fi TV again very soon, fans also want him to remain with the *Star Trek* franchise, mostly because of the great care that was put into *Picard* Season 3. As a love letter to fans of *The Next Generation* era of *Trek*, Matalas also noted that a huge part of the inspiration for *Picard*’s final season came from the classic-era *Star Trek* films.

To that end, we sat down with Matalas to discuss the influence of *The Search for Spock* and the classic *Trek* movies on *Picard*, what he hopes for the future, and why he loves *Star Trek* fans so much.

HOW MUCH DID *THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK* INFLUENCE THE AESTHETICS AND MOOD OF *PICARD* SEASON 3?

Probably more so than *The Wrath of Khan* in a lot of ways. I mean, that was the first time you really got to expand in the modern era on what Starfleet looks like with Spacedock and *Excelsior*. We got the *Reliant* and the Regula station in *The Wrath of Khan*, but *The Search for Spock* really expanded it. Not to mention the single most iconic alien starship in the *Star Trek* universe: the Klingon Bird-of-Prey. *The Search for Spock* is burned into my DNA as the height of what modern *Star Trek* could be. It was also the height of those ILM [Industrial Light & Magic] miniatures.

AND YOU HAD THE ACTUAL *STAR TREK III* SPACEDOCK IN *PICARD*'S FINAL SEASON. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

We knew we wanted to do a new Spacedock because we hadn't seen it in so long. So there's that, which you get in the first episode of Season 3. But, then, we needed a design for the [starship] museum, and there was something cool about the old Spacedock itself being preserved. We had the base of the model already. The idea was that you could kill a lot of birds with one stone there. In that way, there was a historical aspect to it, as well as an aesthetic choice.

THERE'S ALSO A BIG NAUTICAL VIBE IN *PICARD* SEASON 3, THAT SEEMS TO REFERENCE THE '80S *TREK* FILMS. . .

Well, yes. *The Search for Spock* has that feeling for sure, but I think [director] Nicholas Meyer's influence with *Star Trek II* [*The Wrath of Khan*] and *Star Trek VI* [*The Undiscovered Country*] was also a big part of what we were going for with *Picard* Season 3. He's got those ship bells that we literally return to and use throughout *Picard* Season 3. There are a lot of modern-day Navy traditions as well, which are peppered throughout *Picard* Season 3.

Below left: Todd Stashwick (with *12 Monkeys* co-star Amanda Schull). His *Picard* role of Capt. Shaw was specially written for him and he was always meant to die. "He's named Shaw after Robert Shaw in *Jaws*," Matalas (below right) said. "He was gonna get eaten by the shark." He added that there is a "wonderful way" for Shaw to return if "we ever were to come back."

Star Trek III writer Harve Bennett started writing the film from the ending, when Spock (Leonard Nimoy) remembers Jim's (William Shatner) name, and worked backward from there.

DOES *THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK* DESERVE MORE PRAISE?

The fact that *Star Trek III* is ever on the recipient end of any kind of harsh criticism is surprising to me. If you think about it, it's *Star Trek*'s first foray into serialized storytelling. And the thing that always appeals to me the most is how deeply personal the movie is. It's about those crew members coming together as friends to save another friend and they're willing to break all the rules to do it. It's probably the most emotional and character-forward *Trek* movie, after *The Wrath of Khan*. I love the ending. I love it when Spock [Leonard Nimoy] says, "Jim…your name is Jim." I love the feeling of it. It's very traumatic and the storytelling is ballsy. I think it should be ranked right up there with *The Wrath of Khan*. I think of those three films—*The Wrath of Khan*, *The Search for Spock* and *The Voyage Home*—as a trilogy. A perfect trilogy.

IT'S NOW BEEN A LITTLE OVER A YEAR SINCE THE FINAL SEASON OF *PICARD* CAME OUT. WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE SEEING THE FAN RESPONSE?

It's just been so unbelievably, overwhelmingly positive. To be able to connect on a personal level with these fans who talk about what the show made them feel has been incredible. But not just for me. I know this is true for everyone, for Jonathan Frakes, for Todd Stashwick, Brent Spiner, for LeVar Burton. For them to see it all happen again is really touching. Going to conventions and talking to people in person connects you with an audience in a way that social media doesn't always do.

CAN WE ASK YOU ABOUT THE *PICARD* SPINOFF, *STAR TREK: LEGACY*? IS IT HAPPENING?

You can ask. Right now, the answer is, no, *Star Trek: Legacy* is not in development at Paramount. Could that change? I don't know. I hope that will change every day. (For more on *Picard* and *Legacy*, see page 32.) 🖖

Below: Matalas and the cast of *Picard* reunited for a huge celebration at the Saturn Awards in February 2024, with the series picking up four awards: Best Science Fiction Television Series, Best Actor for Stewart, Best Supporting Actor for Frakes, and Best Supporting Actress for Ryan.

EMY OF
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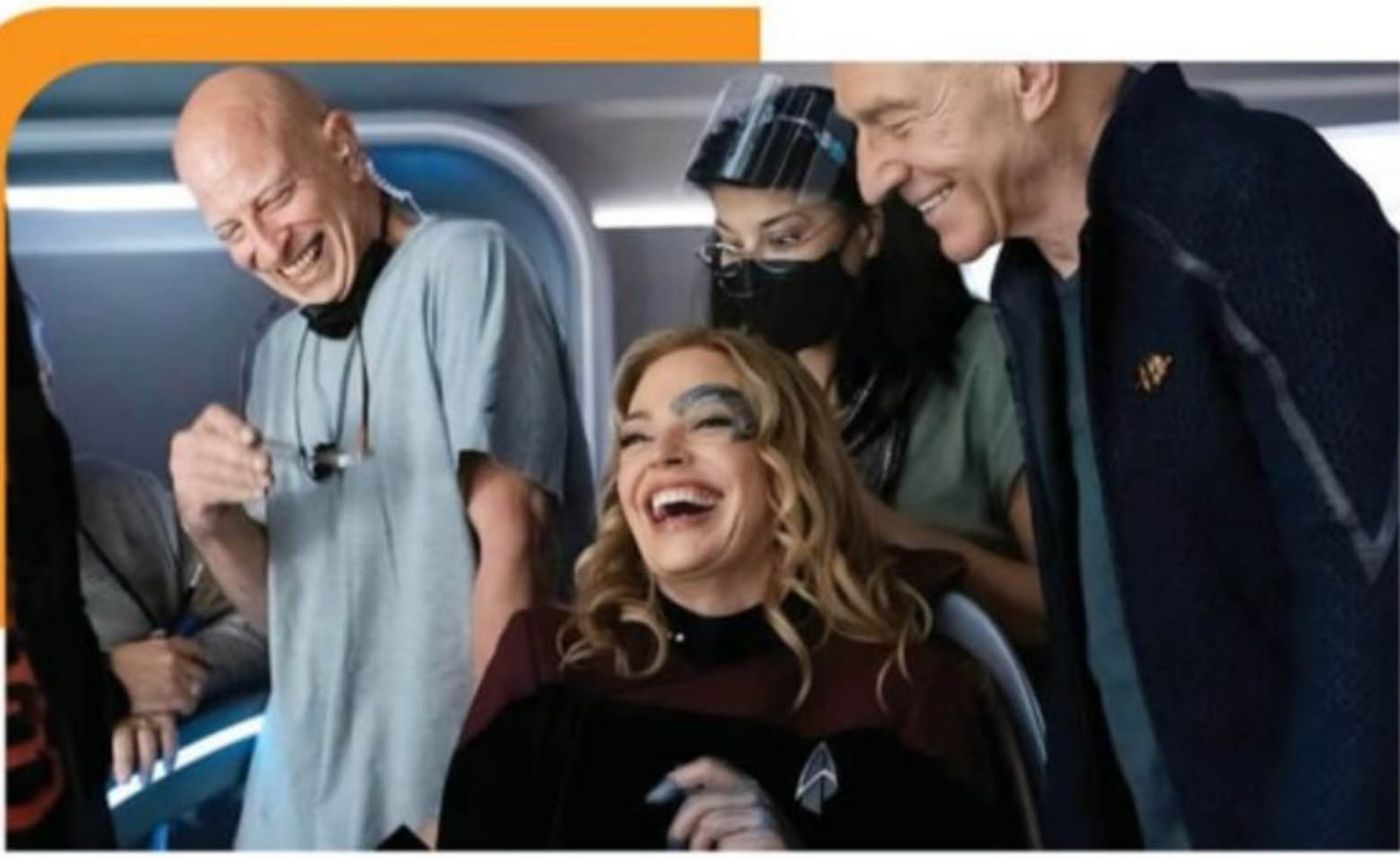
“They’re maniacs, that cast. Anytime you call ‘Cut!’ they’re singing, they’re dancing, they’re joking, they’re blah-blah-blah,” Matalas told Screen Rant of the actors’ camaraderie on the set while filming the final season of *Picard*.



Matalas took the same approach with *Picard* that Nimoy did with the ensemble’s storylines in *The Search for Spock*. “It was important to me that the entire cast feel comfortable and onboard with where their characters were. And where they were taking them,” he said.

While we may have to wait till 2025 for Season 3 of *Strange New Worlds*, don't expect to see Spock (Ethan Peck) and Uhura (Celia Rose Gooding) hooking up as they did in J.J. Abrams' alternate Kelvin timeline.

CHAPTER

1

WHAT'S NEXT

We explore what's in store for the current *Star Trek* series and share the latest news on upcoming projects and the next big-screen blockbuster.

FUTURE'S END

Discovery Season 5 tackles the big questions as the most ambitious *Star Trek* series ever draws to a close.

By Ryan Britt

Season 5 of *Star Trek: Discovery* is the end of the road for the titular starship—but it didn't start that way. After filming was completed, it was decided, retroactively, that this season would be the last voyage of the USS *Discovery*. On March 2, 2023, *Discovery* co-creator Alex Kurtzman and showrunner Michelle Paradise issued a joint statement on startrek.com saying, "No series continues forever, of course, so this day was always going to come." According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, because *Discovery*'s swan song was retroactive, after initially wrapping production, there was "additional filming to help craft a conclusion for the series."

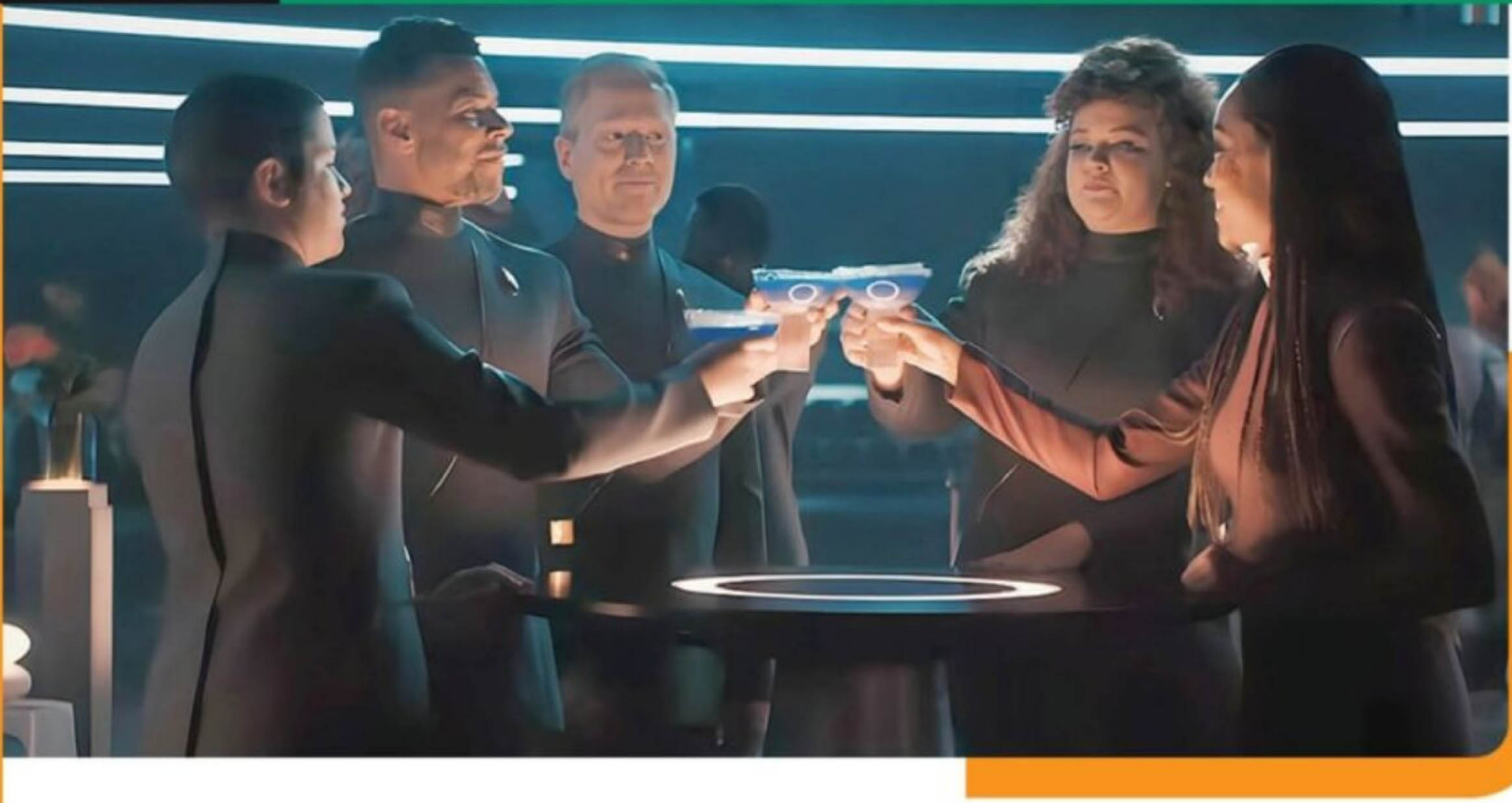
But other than giving the story an endpoint, what is the bulk of Season 5 actually about? In proud *Star Trek* tradition, the final outing of *Discovery*, which premiered on Paramount+ in April 2024, tackles deep and complex questions of existence; specifically, the idea of where and why humans exist in the first place.

As teased by Jonathan Frakes, who directed several episodes of *Discovery*, including the first part of the series finale, this season is "*Indiana Jones* this year instead of

The *Star Trek: Discovery* cast, from left: David Ajala (Book), Mary Wiseman (Tilly), Doug Jones (Saru), Sonequa Martin-Green (Capt. Burnham), Wilson Cruz (Culber), Anthony Rapp (Stamets), Blu del Barrio (Adria), and Callum Keith Rennie (Capt. Rayner).

the heavy emo of Season 4." As the first few episodes of Season 5 have shown, the storyline uses the narrative cocktail of the *Indiana Jones* films, in which an ancient puzzle is also combined with humbling questions about faith and the meaning of life.

In "Red Directive," the first episode of *Discovery* Season 5, the clandestine Dr. Kovich (David Cronenberg) assigned Capt. Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green) and the USS *Discovery* to a top-secret Starfleet mission: Secure the ancient technology that was used to create all sentient life in the first place. And, to do this, *Discovery* flashed back to a 1993 *The Next Generation* episode "The Chase." Back then, Picard (Patrick Stewart) and Crusher (Gates McFadden)—as well as representatives for the Klingons, Romulans and Cardassians—all learn that the vast majority of *Star Trek* species all have a common ancestor. In 2012, *TNG* writer Ronald D. Moore reminisced about the origin of this concept, saying, "Why was the show filled only with people with bumps on their foreheads?" By the end of "The Chase," we got the answer: As hinted in *The Original Series*, a distant and ancient bipedal humanoid alien species seeded various planets to create genetic remixes of themselves.



Above: "They've got a stunning plan for a very satisfying ending," director Jonathan Frakes told CinemaBlend. Below: *Discovery* gained some new faces in Season 5, including (from left): *Battlestar Galactica*'s Callum Keith Rennie as gruff Capt. Rayner of the USS *Antares*, who butted heads with Burnham and crew; *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* actor Eve Harlow played a human mercenary named Moll; *The Expanse*'s Elias Toufexis portrayed L'ak, Moll's "beloved." Season 5 "is pure adventure from Episode 1 to 10," he told Trek Culture. "It's chases and battles and there's still all the *Star Trek* stuff. There's a lot."

As Kovich explained to Burnham at the top of the new season, the knowledge that Picard uncovered in *TNG* has been "classified for centuries." Because Burnham and the crew of *Discovery* are originally from the 23rd century and now reside in the 32nd century, they leap-frogged over all of the *Next Generation* era, making the news that there are alien "progenitors" doubly shocking for the *Discovery* characters. "A few thousand years ago, we would have called them gods," Kovich said before revealing that the super-advanced technology to create all of life had been found by criminal privateers named Moll (Eve Harlow) and L'ak (Elias Toufexis). And so, the chase that started in "The Chase" began anew in *Discovery*, but with stakes decidedly higher. The Federation couldn't let this life-creating tech fall into the wrong hands, making this ancient scientific knowledge "the greatest treasure in the known galaxy."

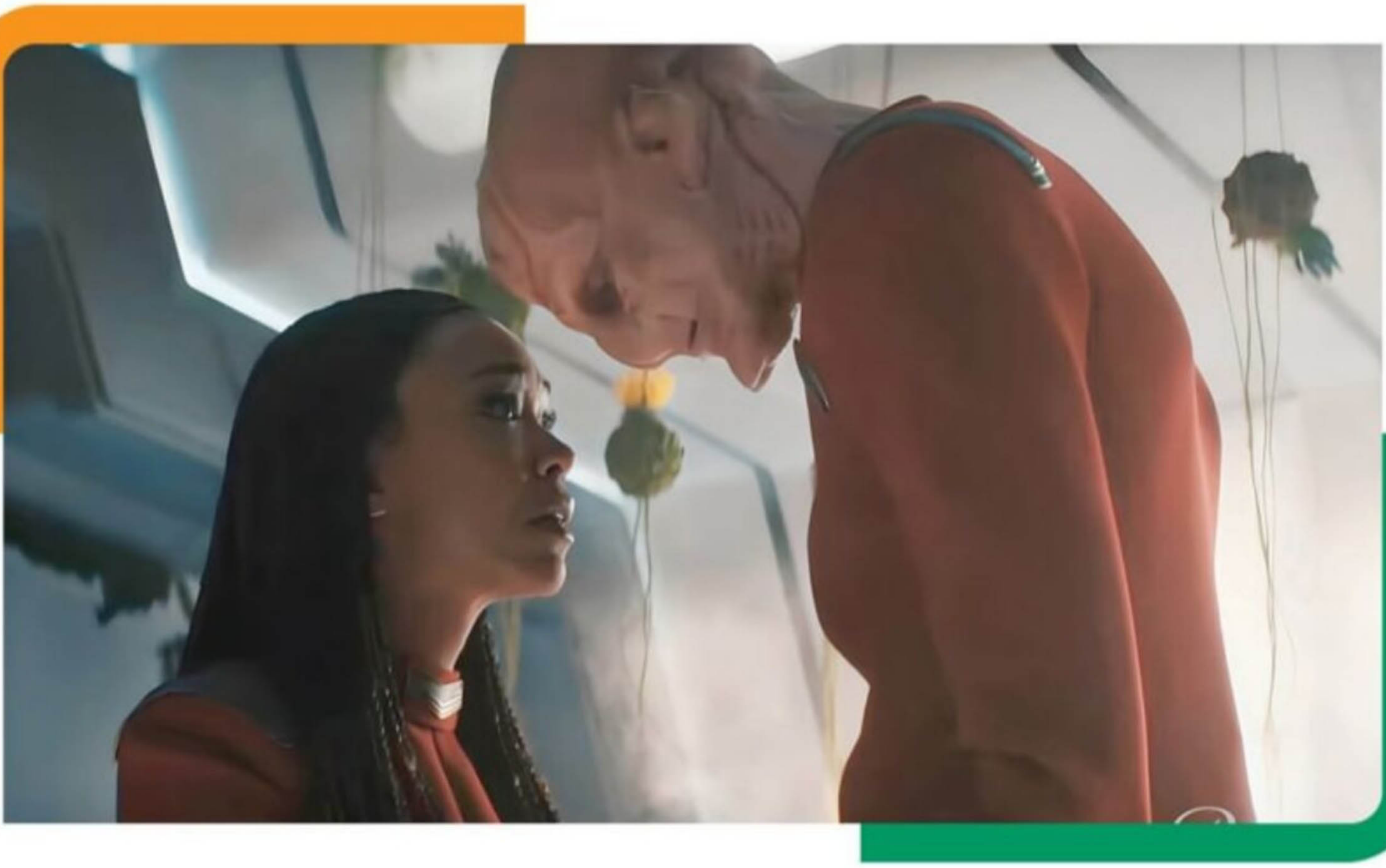
Still, the final season of *Discovery* isn't just about an epic treasure hunt. As was true back in 2017, when the show began, this *Trek* series is still grounded in characters and their relationships. Burnham and Book (David Ajala) were re-teamed in Season 5, recalling their secret year of working as intergalactic couriers on the edge of the frontier. Meanwhile, for fans who were rooting for Saru (Doug Jones) to settle down with his Vulcan paramour—President T'Rina (Tara Rosling)—the final season did not disappoint. And, just because Tilly (Mary Wiseman) decided to become a teacher at Starfleet Academy in Season 4, she was very much a part of the crew this

season, even if she was still technically a teacher. Season 5 also revisited Adira (Blu del Barrio) and their relationship with Gray (Ian Alexander), as well as touching on the burgeoning artificial intelligence that resides inside of *Discovery*; the supercomputer Zora (Annabelle Wallis).

All in all, *Discovery* was able to touch base with all of its characters in Season 5 because the story was big enough to allow for more stand-alone episodes. As Paradise told fans at CCXP in Brazil in 2023, "This season…allows us to have more episodic adventures.… There are some very cool adventures and some really fun episodes." This isn't to say *Discovery* Season 5 fully embraced the format of *Strange New Worlds* (or earlier classic iterations of *Trek*), but the larger, overarching story created wiggle room, letting one of the most hard-hitting and ponderous *Star Trek* shows of them all end on a slightly more fun note than it began. This may have been the *Trek* show that began in the blood and fire of war, but it certainly wasn't going to finish that way.

With the end of *Discovery*, could any of the characters continue in other iterations of the franchise? Capt. Burnham herself, Martin-Green, is down to do a spinoff, which could feature her character again. In March 2023, she told *ET*, "I love that the franchise is expanding, right? So, there's all kinds of opportunities." If the *Starfleet Academy* series is set around the same time as *Discovery*—sometime in the 32nd century—then, of course, several *Discovery* characters could certainly reappear (see page 42 for more). But, even if Burnham never travels back in time to a more retro-*Trek* era, she has made a huge impact on the franchise for one simple reason: Spock will always remember her as his very human, and very secret, sister. 🖖

Above: There's "a great sense of adventure and fun that we were really adamant about injecting into the show so it's a bit of a tonal shift," Martin-Green told TV Line. Below: Jones revealed to Screen Rant that his character goes through "a dignified change" with an offer of a new Starfleet position.



LEGAC

A *Picard* sequel series is ready to warp out. So, what's the holdup?

By Ryan Britt

Y IN LIMBO

Fans loved the third and final season of *Star Trek: Picard*, but will adventures starring the next version of *The Next Generation* actually happen? Right now, the answer is maybe, but it may take a matter/antimatter miracle to get the much-discussed spinoff series—*Star Trek: Legacy*—out of Spacedock.

But first, how did we get here? In 2020, the introspective and risky first season of *Star Trek: Picard* received mixed reviews from critics and fans, making it unlikely that the mainstream would be clamoring for a sequel series. But then, in 2023, Season 3 happened. After two seasons

Picard (Patrick Stewart, left) and Jack Crusher (Ed Speleers), his newly discovered son. Speleers told Cinema Blend in 2023 that "there are definitely more stories to be told if we're given the opportunity to tell them."

Fans were thrilled when *The Next Generation* crew reunited for Season 3 of *Picard*. Below: "I think we could do a movie," Stewart told IndieWire. "That would be, I think, a very appropriate way to say, 'And goodbye, folks.'"

of largely avoiding a full reunion of the beloved *Next Generation* cast, *Picard*'s final season brought back everyone. By the finale, Patrick Stewart's titular captain was sitting on the old bridge of the *Enterprise-D* along with Jonathan Frakes (William Riker), LeVar Burton (Geordi La Forge), Gates McFadden (Beverly Crusher), Michael Dorn (Worf), Marina Sirtis (Deanna Troi)—and even Brent Spiner as a new version of the android Data, who managed to come back to life for the second time.

Picard Season 3 broke audience records for Paramount+ in early 2023 by becoming the first of the new *Star Trek* shows since 2017 to rank in Nielsen's top 10 streaming series in the U.S. This final season of the show was also widely praised, debuting with a 100% rating on Rotten Tomatoes, and holding on to a 98% by the end of its run, as the audience score held fast at 89%.

Spearheaded by fan-favorite writer and showrunner Terry Matalas—who cut his teeth on the prequel series *Enterprise* and also helmed SyFy's critically acclaimed *12 Monkeys*—the third season of *Picard* was a tribute not just to the 1990s golden age of *The*

Next Generation, but also the style and tone of the classic *Trek* films.

And, while the 10-episode run brought closure to *The Next Generation* era, this series also introduced several brand-new characters including Picard and Crusher's hitherto unknown son, Jack Crusher (Ed Speleers), as well as Geordi's two daughters, Sidney La Forge (Ashlei Sharpe Chestnut) and Alandra La Forge (Mica Burton, who is LeVar Burton's real-life daughter). The series also introduced Todd Stashwick as instant fan-favorite Capt. Liam Shaw, who, upon dying a hero's death, passed the captaincy of the USS *Titan* to Seven of Nine (Jeri Ryan). Along with Raffi (Michelle Hurd) and Jack, the series ended with Capt. Seven in command of the newly christened *Enterprise-G*, boldly going...somewhere. Clearly, another series, focused on this new 25th-century *Enterprise*, is next, right?

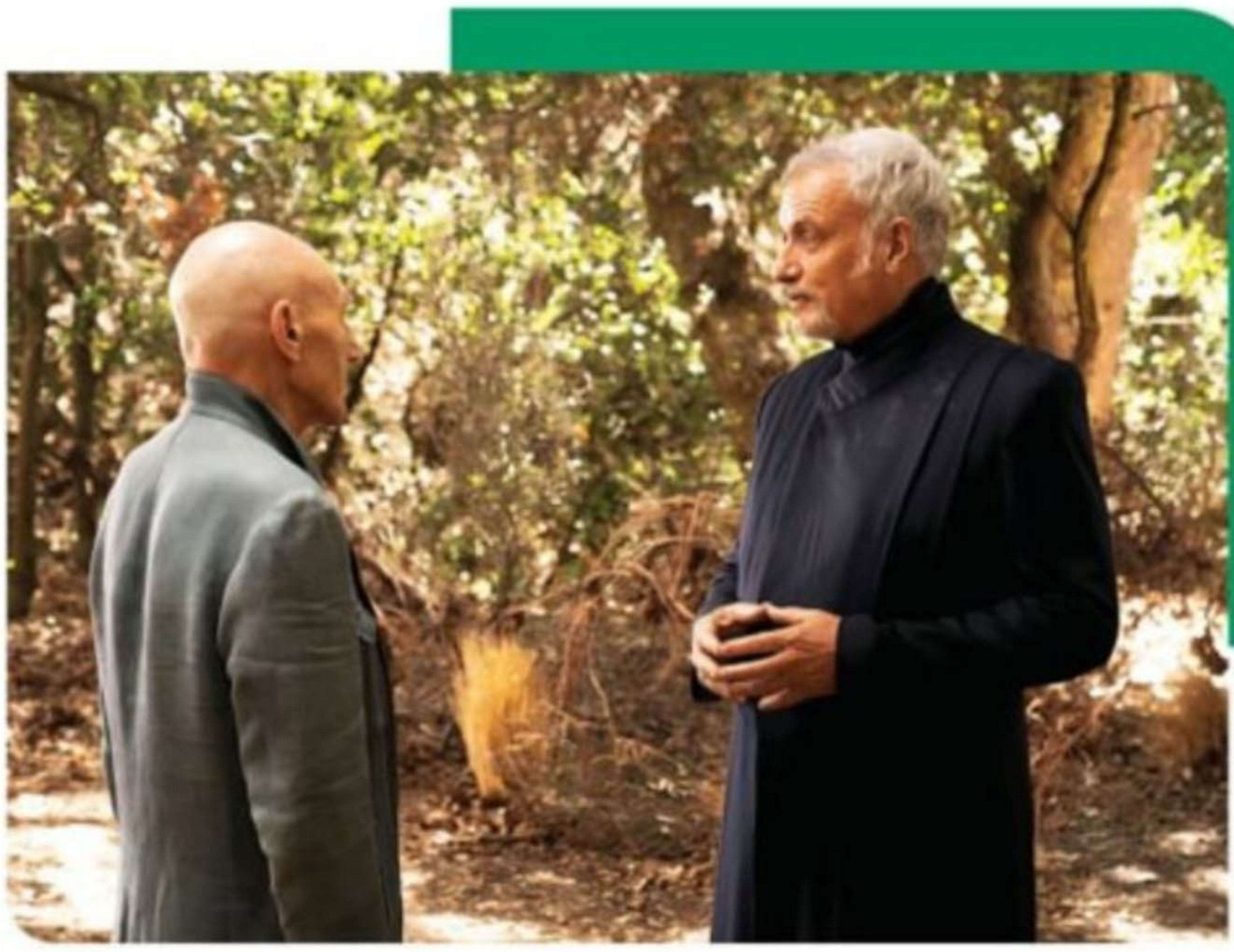
Not so fast. In our exclusive interview with Terry Matalas (see page 20), he reiterated that *Star Trek: Legacy* is "not in development with Paramount." Meanwhile, in early 2024, *Picard* production designer Dave Blass told Warp Factor Trek that "*Legacy* is just a nice idea," and that even if it were officially greenlighted, "everything takes time and a lot of money."

Since the triumphant final episode of *Picard*—"The Last Generation"— aired in April 2023, Matalas has told fans that they would need to "be loud" in order to convince the powers that be to greenlight a sequel series. He's also made it clear that should *Star Trek: Legacy* happen, that it would focus on Seven, Jack, Raffi, Sidney and the new crew.

Frakes has also indicated he would want to return as Riker in the hypothetical show, and a post-credits scene that saw the reappearance of Q (John de Lancie) would set up an exciting new adventure, with Matalas saying he "already knows how the story would go."

The writer and producer has also long maintained that telling stories in the early 25th century is what he hopes for the future

From top: Speleers' character, Jack, met Q (John de Lancie) in a post-credits scene in the final episode of *Picard*. "[Showrunner] Terry [Matalas] and I talked a lot about maybe doing more in the spinoff," Speleers told *Star Trek Explorer* magazine in September 2023. "I just hope it's the first of many scenes with John de Lancie."; Geordi's daughter Alandra was played by LeVar Burton's real-life daughter, Mica Burton; Ashlei Sharpe Chestnut portrayed Geordi's other daughter, Sidney. "We became actual sisters," Mica told Nerdist.



of the franchise, saying that he believes this post-*Next Generation/Deep Space Nine/Voyager* era is "the present day of *Star Trek*." Stashwick has also hinted that Capt. Shaw could come back to life. Plus, as Matalas has pointed out, there are plenty of *TNG*-era relationships left to explore, telling fans at a Trek Talks 3 panel in January 2024, "Michael [Dorn] and I were talking—what if we did more? You think, what's the Klingon Empire like [in the early 25th century]?"

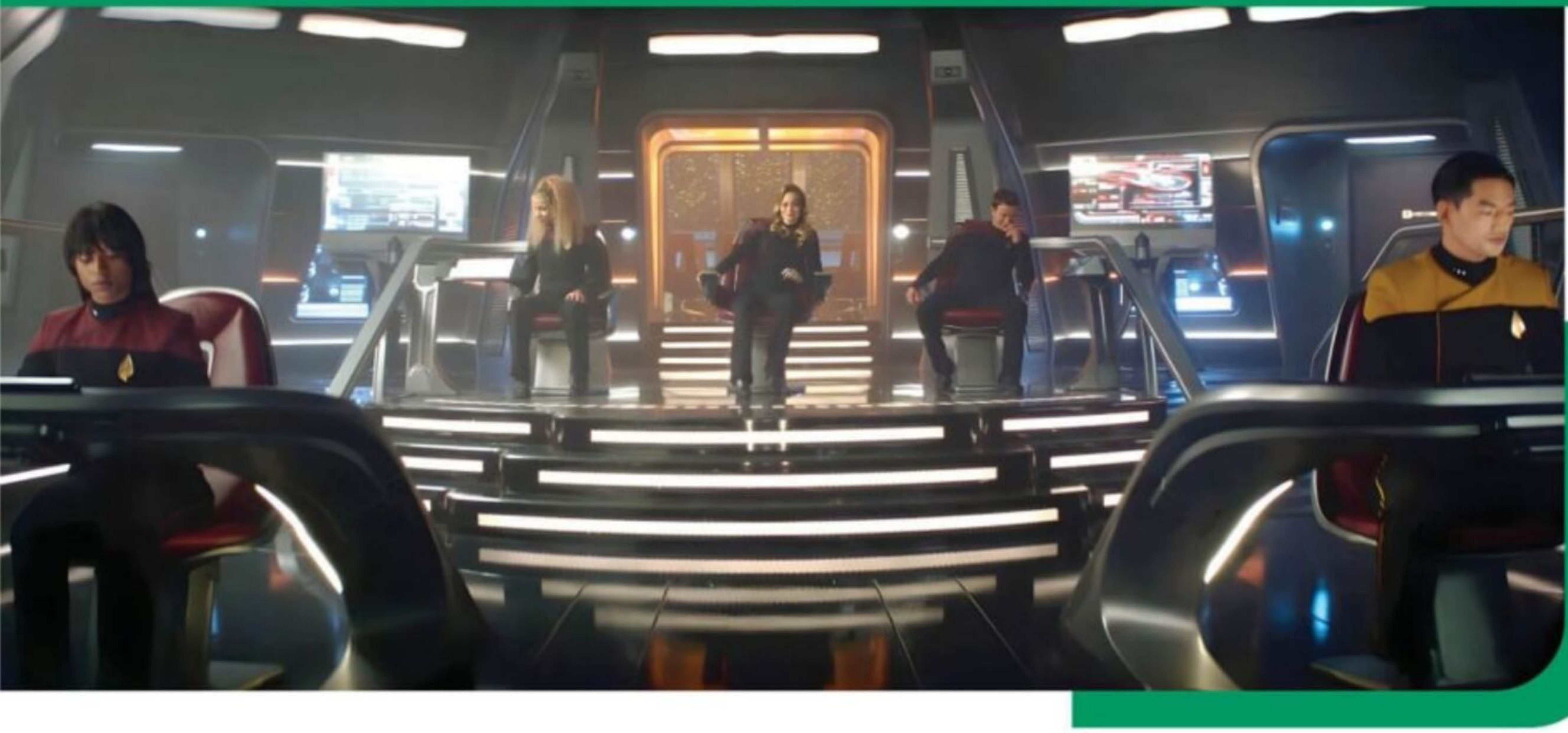
Trekkies have been clamoring for news about *Legacy*, even before *Picard* Season 3 ended. Alex Kurtzman, the overall producer of every new *Trek* project, has said that the fans have been heard "loud and clear," while *Strange New Worlds* co-creator Akiva Goldsman has said that the "appetite for *Star Trek: Legacy* is undeniable." Goldsman, who co-created *Picard* with Michael Chabon, Kirsten Beyer and Kurtzman, even admitted that he signed the fan petition to get *Legacy* made.

While many fear the window is closing for the series to actually be produced with the same creative team that made *Picard* Season 3 a slam-dunk, Stewart has claimed to be "gently pushing" Paramount for one more movie from the Picard universe.

In January, Hurd told TV Insider that while the next in-development new *Star Trek* series is *Starfleet Academy*, there's hope for *Legacy* after that. "If the fans still want it, they'll [CBS Studios] start working on *Star Trek: Legacy*." Speaking during Trek Talks 3 that same month, Matalas said: "I don't think you ever really need to fully say goodbye to any of these characters or storylines."

According to Kurtzman, ultimately, the holdup on developing *Star Trek: Legacy* is simply because the film and TV industry is in a state of chaotic transition at the moment, coupled with the fact that Paramount is up for sale and rumored to be either bought outright or merged with another studio. "The entire

This page, from top: John de Lancie (right), who played Q, lamented to cbr.com in February 2024 that he fears the time for a *Picard* spinoff might have passed; Michelle Hurd told trekmovie.com that if *Star Trek: Legacy* does happen, she hopes her character, Raffi, will reunite with Worf (Michael Dorn) as a team of intelligence operatives. "He's been an absolute gift," she said. "We just clicked, naturally."; with Capt. Seven (Jeri Ryan) at the helm of *Enterprise-G*, *Legacy* is nicely set up. In fact, trekmovie.com reported that Paramount did keep the rebuilt *Enterprise* bridge set (pictured opposite), "just in case."



industry is upside down right now and things just aren't happening in the volume that they were happening before," Kurtzman told Den of Geek in 2023. "But if I had a magic button, a magic 'greenlight button,' for *Star Trek: Legacy*, and it was all on me, I'd push that button today."

Essentially, because the *Section 31* movie and the *Starfleet Academy* show were already greenlighted before the 2023 WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes, those new *Trek* shows are still moving forward. Ditto *Strange New Worlds* Season 3 and *Prodigy* Season 2; both were in motion before the 2023 entertainment industry shutdown began.

Legacy, on the other hand, was always hypothetical, and never a guarantee. "There was a fun period of time that it looked like it [*Legacy*] could happen," de Lancie told the Trek Movies All-Access podcast in February. "But then there was the writers strike, which took a lot of people's attention away. I don't think that they [Paramount] expected that Season 3 was going to be as good and as well received."

It's strange to think that today, a sequel to *The Next Generation*, based on a series starring Patrick Stewart, is somehow the underdog of all of *Star Trek*. But, until the very real logistics of the 21st century settle down, the world of the 25th century will just have to wait. There's still some hope, mostly because there's so much desire to make *Legacy*, from everyone involved. But whether the actual real-life next generation of *Star Trek* revisits the era of *The Next Generation* remains to be seen. And, if *Legacy* never happens, it may go down in *Star Trek* history as the most tragic warp not taken.

CRUSHER BROTHERS

If *Legacy* doesn't happen, Wil Wheaton, who played *TNG*'s Wesley Crusher, has an alternate idea—a *Picard* spinoff starring Wesley and his half-brother, Jack Crusher (Ed Speleers). "I would love to have opportunities to work with Ed Speleers and be like, 'Turns out I'm your half-brother you never knew about. I'm kind of a super being. You're not supposed to know that I'm here. Things don't need to get weird for you, but don't worry, I'm keeping an eye on you. I'm out!'" he told Screen Rant at the Saturn Awards in February 2024. The last time we saw Wesley was in Season 2 of *Picard*, when he recruited Kore Soong (Isa Briones) into the mysterious group known as the Travelers. Speleers previously praised Wheaton as a "lovely human" and said he'd be open to reprising his role "because I love it."

EXPLORING STRANGER NEW WORLDS

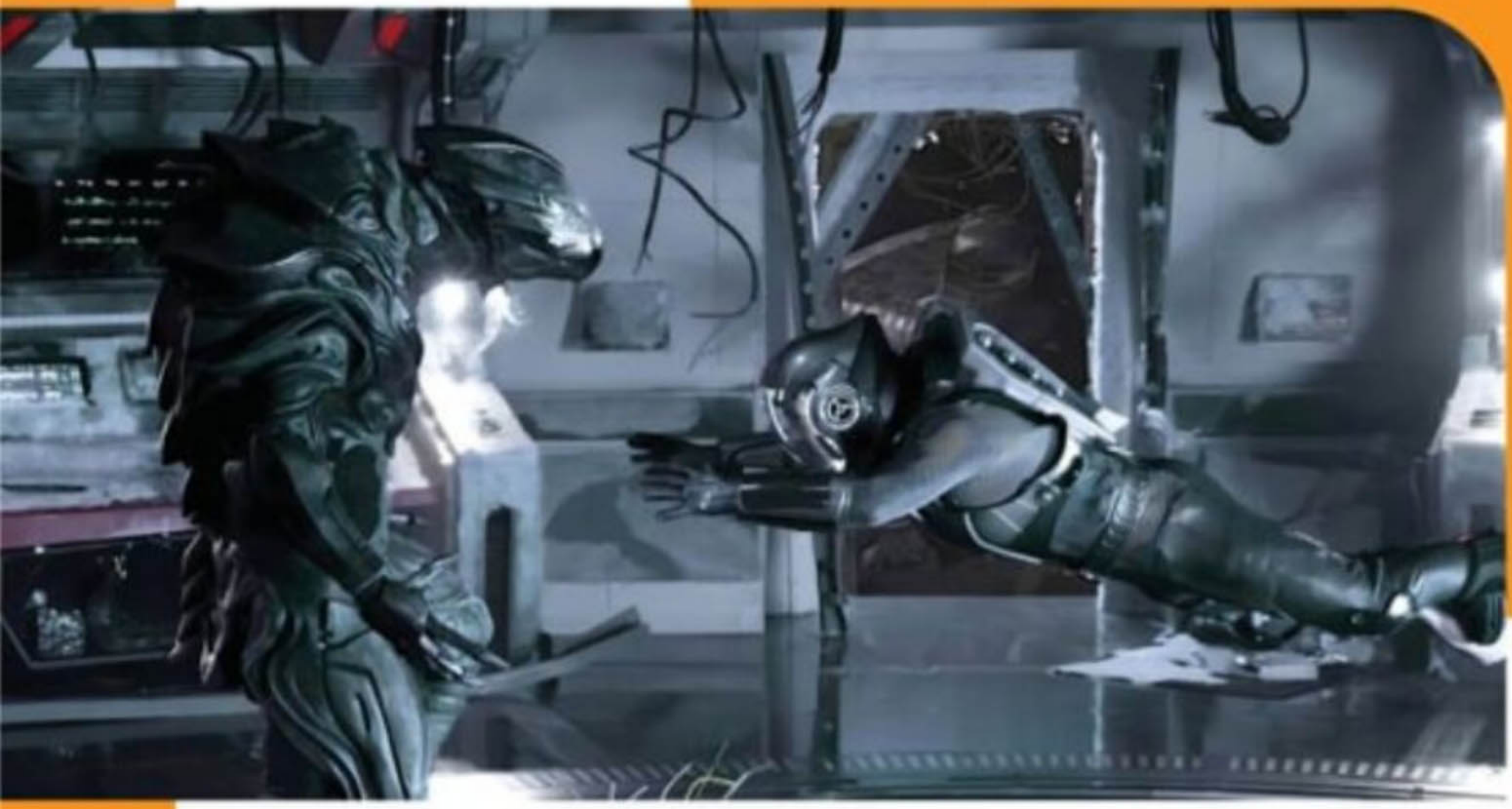
Fans are facing a long wait for the resolution of the Gorn cliffhanger in the upcoming Season 3. By Ryan Britt

From left: Paul Wesley (James Kirk), Carol Kane (Pelia), Melissa Navia (Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokun (Dr. M'Benga), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien Singh), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Anson Mount (Christopher Pike), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Ethan Peck (Spock).

In 2019, Capt. Pike (Anson Mount), Spock (Ethan Peck) and Number One (Rebecca Romijn) crashed *Star Trek: Discovery* Season 2 in an epic storyline that saw the crew of the *Enterprise* team up with the crew of the *Discovery* to defeat an evil AI hellbent on destroying everything. Nearly the instant this happened, fans started clamoring for a spinoff series focused on these unseen adventures of the Starship *Enterprise* under Capt. Pike. Behind the scenes, the idea for a Pike-centric old-school *Star Trek* show was initially fast-tracked, but then it was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, when *Strange New Worlds* Season 1 debuted in 2022, it was the biggest overnight success of all the post-*Discovery Star Trek* shows. Although the series sticks to a largely episodic format—a fresh strange new world every week—each season has sported a loose thematic arc.

Throughout *SNW* Season 1, Christopher Pike grappled with the knowledge of his impending personal tragedy—as depicted in the famous 1966 *The Original Series* two-parter "The Menagerie." For Season 2, in 2023, Pike loosened up considerably, and the season as a whole dropped an even more eclectic mix of episodes and tones, including two high-concept episodes, both of which featured never-before-seen *Star Trek* milestones.

In "Those Old Scientists," *Strange New Worlds* crossed over with the animated comedy



series *Lower Decks*, which featured Tawny Newsome and Jack Quaid playing their animated characters (Mariner and Boimler) in live action for the first time and, conversely, also featured the *Strange New Worlds* crew in animated form.

Two episodes later, *SNW* dropped the epic "Subspace Rhapsody," the first-ever *Star Trek* musical episode, with original songs written by Tom Polce and Kay Hanley and choreography by Roberto Campanella. The episode was an immediate hit—and the soundtrack album briefly beat Taylor Swift for top album streams on iTunes.

On the heels of "Subspace Rhapsody," Season 2 concluded with a massive cliffhanger episode, "Hegemony," in which Starfleet went head-to-head with the Gorn. First seen in *The Original Series* episode "Arena," this lizard alien species was given a considerably menacing upgrade in Season 1 and returned in a huge way for the Season 2 finale. As the Gorn were closing in—and Capt. Batel (Melanie Scrofano) was infected with Gorn eggs—Season 2 ended with the words "To Be Continued…" splashed across the screen. Series producers Akiva Goldsman and Henry Alonso Myers confirmed in 2023 that this cliffhanger was intended to evoke the same feeling as *The Next Generation* classic "The Best of Both Worlds."

Goldsman told cbr.com that he actively campaigned for the inclusion of the Gorn in *Strange New Worlds*. "I thought it was important for there to be real monsters in our galaxy. That doesn't mean that 10 years, two seasons from now, we won't be having a nice chat with the Gorn. But right now in Seasons 1 and 2 and 3, they're the monsters. By the way, many of the other *Star Trek* antagonists began as alien, as Other—forgive the use of 'alien'—but we learned to connect with them. Not so the Gorn. The Gorn are not understandable to us in this way, not

STRANGE NEW WORLDS
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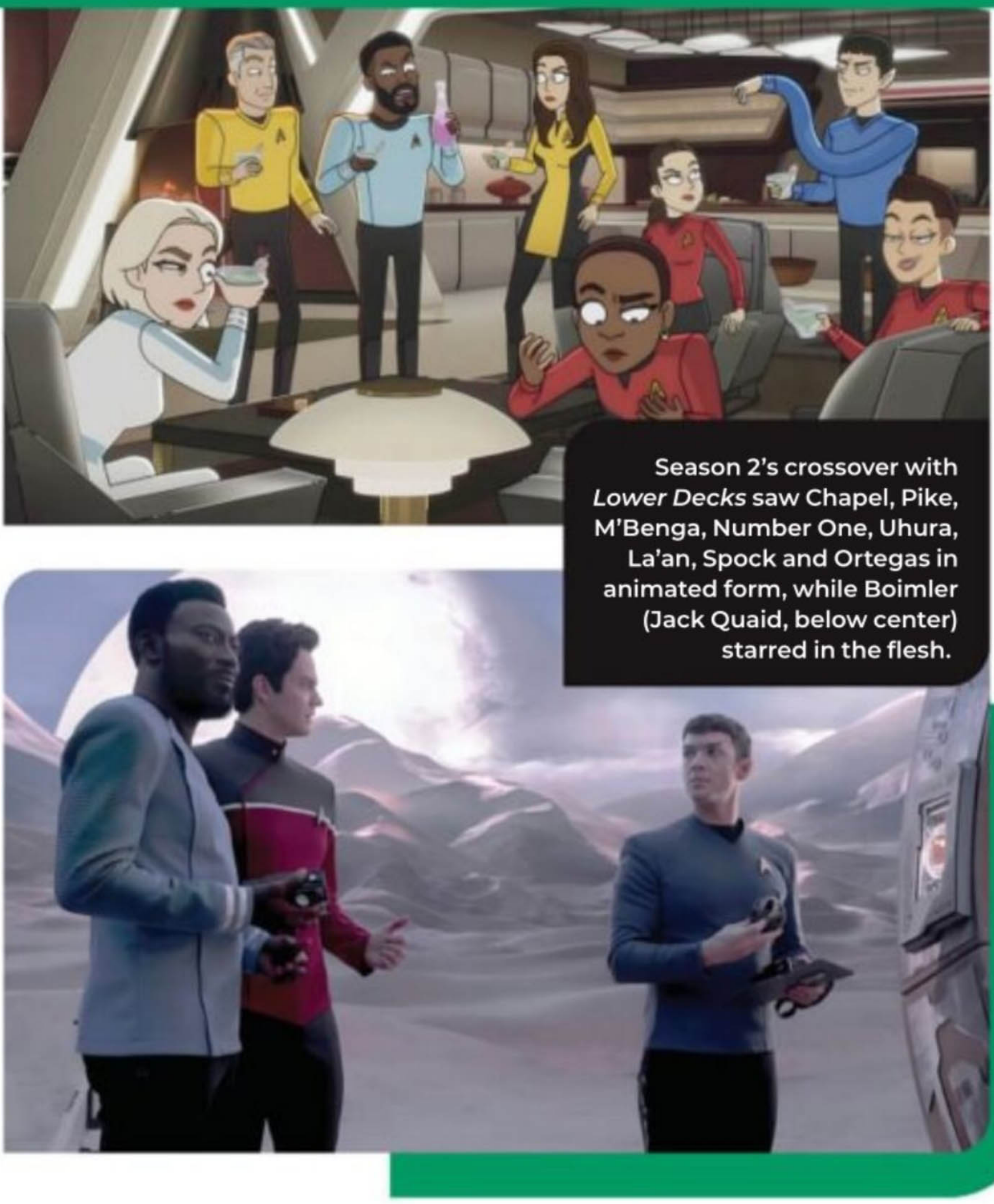
135

From top: The cast sang "We Are One," the finale to Season 2's "Subspace Rhapsody" musical episode. Songwriters Kay Hanley and Tom Polce took inspiration from the classic musical episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*; the Gorn kidnapped a number of crew members including M'Benga, Ortegas, Sam Kirk (Dan Jeannotte) and La'an Noonien-Singh, who survived a Gorn attack as a child and may be the key to their escape; the new season started shooting in Toronto in December 2023 and is expected to wrap in May.

relatable to us in this way. Part of our galaxy is be good, be kind, be empathetic and also understand that evil exists, because seeing with compassion does mean you should be blind to horror. The Gorn are monsters."

Filming for Season 3 finally began in December. While it's unlikely we'll see another musical, director Dermott Downs, who helmed "Subspace Rhapsody," told Collider that a Wild West-inspired episode "wouldn't be out of the box." Screen Rant also reported that one of the big storylines will involve a love triangle between Spock (Ethan Peck), Nurse Chapel (Jess Bush) and her fiance, Roger Korby. And Christina Chong, whose character, La'an Noonien-Singh, was kidnapped by the Gorn at the end of Season 2, teased the upcoming season premiere on Instagram, writing that it "is going to be EPIC."

Fans may have to sit tight until 2025 for the new season of *Strange New Worlds*, but it's definitely going to be worth the wait.



Season 2's crossover with *Lower Decks* saw Chapel, Pike, M'Benga, Number One, Uhura, La'an, Spock and Ortegas in animated form, while Boimler (Jack Quaid, below center) starred in the flesh.

BEAM HIM UP!

We'll see more of Scotty in Season 3.

Season 3 of *Strange New Worlds* will see one classic character return once more. In a surprising move, the Season 2 finale featured a new version of Montgomery Scott, better known as Scotty. This time, Scotty was played by young comic actor Martin Quinn (right), making him the third actor to portray the iconic Starfleet engineer on-screen.

In *SNW*, we learned that Scotty had been a junior officer on a doomed ship called the *Stardiver*, and he in turn joined Pike and the trapped crew of *Cayuga*. The Season 2 cliffhanger saw Scotty board the *Enterprise*, presumably for the first time, and we learn that resident engineer Pelia (Carol Kane) is the person who gave him that famous nickname.

In August 2023, co-showrunner Henry Alonso Myers confirmed to Inverse, "You will see more of Scotty in Season 3." Having Scotty and Spock on *SNW* raises the possibility that more *Original Series* characters may also make an appearance, with fellow showrunner Akiva Goldsman telling *Variety* that "the longer we stream...the more likely it becomes. Given our druthers—because Henry and I are both greedy and gluttons for punishment—we'd go right into the *TOS* era and see what happens. So, if we're around long enough, sure."

For those keeping score, we've yet to see younger versions of *The Original Series*' Season 1 main cast members Sulu and Dr. McCoy on *SNW*.

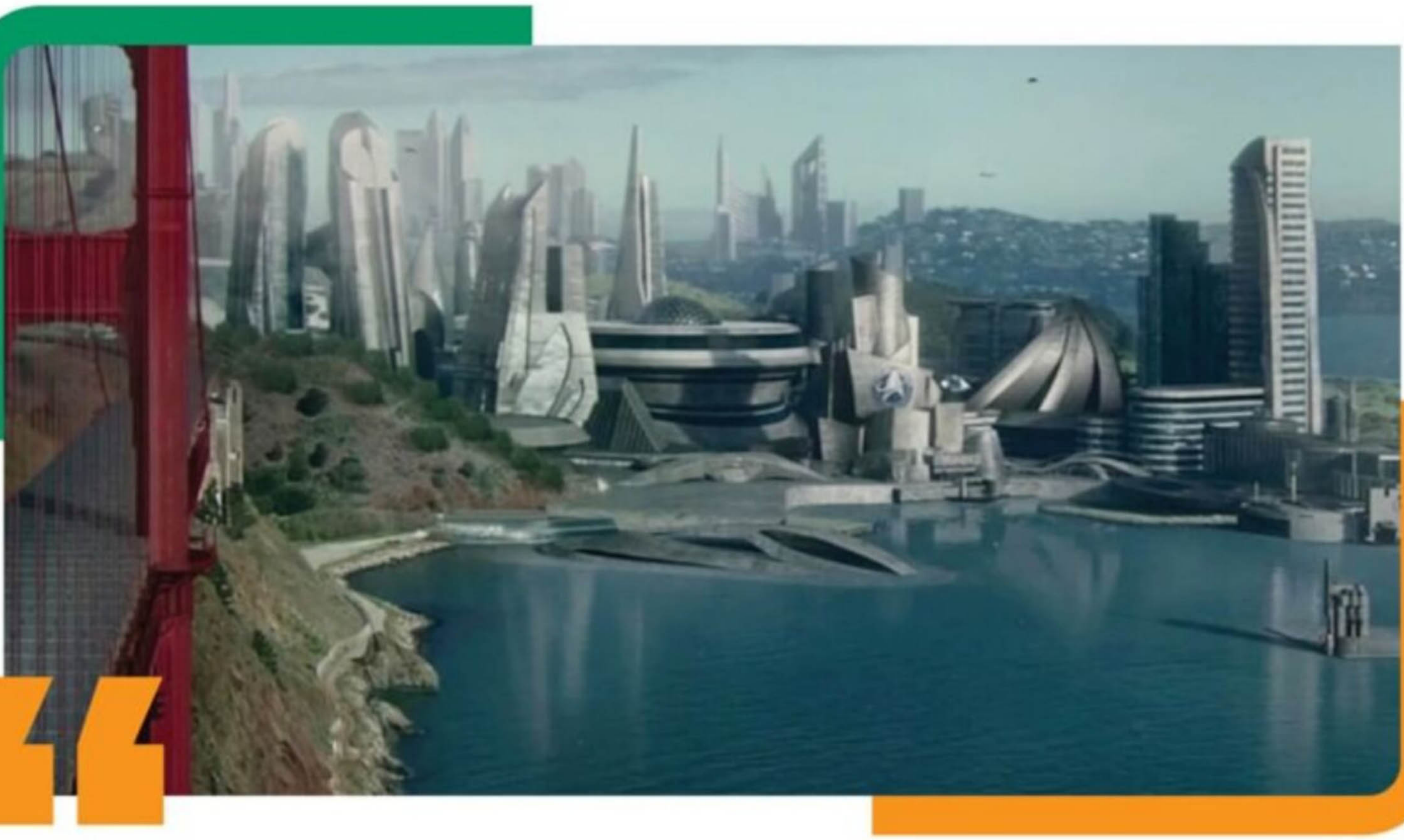
YOUTH TREK

Starfleet Academy could become the first teen drama in the *Star Trek* franchise. By Ryan Britt

While Season 3 of *Picard* was still airing in March 2023, CBS Studios announced that a new series called *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy* would become the next new live-action *Star Trek* TV show.

The series starts shooting in 2024, with *Star Trek* Universe producer Alex Kurtzman telling fans at New York Comic Con in October that he and *Nancy Drew* creator Noga Landau are the showrunners and the new series will be “funny.” Actor and comedian Tawny Newsome (Mariner on *Lower Decks*) has joined the writers room along with *Picard* Season 3 staff writer Kiley Rossetter. With all this in mind, some fans assumed that this meant *Starfleet Academy* might take place in the post-*Next Generation*

Sylvia Tilly (Mary Wiseman) returned for the final season of *Discovery* as an Academy leader, training a new generation of cadets. It's not a stretch for her be part of the *Starfleet Academy* cast.



> "IF IT WERE UP TO ME ONLY, I WOULD BE PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES MUCH FURTHER." PRODUCER ALEX KURTZMAN

era, and could even star the new younger characters (like Elnor, Jack Crusher and Sidney La Forge) from *Picard*.

However, one detail from the March 2023 announcement seems to indicate that *Starfleet Academy* will likely take place around the same time as *Star Trek: Discovery* Seasons 4 and 5—sometime in the 32nd century, several centuries beyond *Picard*. According to a quirky in-universe statement from CBS: "For the first time in over a century, our campus will be reopened to admit individuals a minimum of 16 Earth years (or species equivalent) who dream of exceeding their physical, mental and spiritual limits, who value friendship, camaraderie, honor and devotion to a cause greater than themselves." Seeing as the Academy was closed in the era of *Discovery* Season 3, this statement almost certainly makes *Starfleet Academy* a spinoff from that show. And, because it seems that *Starfleet* will admit members as young as 16, this show could become the first teen drama in the entire *Trek* saga.

Some fans are already wondering what this will look and feel like. With Landau on board, will *Starfleet Academy* become the *Smallville* of the *Trek* franchise? Or will this series be closer in tone to *Riverdale* or the cult-classic *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*? Time will tell, but it's clear that *Star Trek* is looking to the next *next* generation of viewers.

"What I'm so excited about the *Starfleet Academy* is that it's really important that every show really has its own distinct identity," Kurtzman said at the Comic Con panel in October 2023. "And when you're in Starfleet Academy, you're not yet on a ship proper. And so you get to make mistakes, and you get to learn who you are, and figure all that out…. It's ultimately a show that speaks to the generation now."

Newsome told trekmovie.com in February 2024 that she was in "the throes" of writing the series, adding that the characters are "young people. That's an age we haven't seen focused on in a *Trek* cast before. So, yeah, I really think it's just about telling stories that feel very real to that age group, but also to people who are starting their career in Starfleet." The show will also chronicle the lives of the Academy's teachers, who might include some familiar faces, like *Discovery*'s Tilly (Mary Wiseman) and Saru (Doug Jones). "I think Saru would have a lot to offer a class of kids, wouldn't he? With his wisdom and his instructional ways," the actor told Screen Rant in February. We'll see when *Starfleet Academy* is released in 2025.

Opposite, from top: Long considered the obvious setting for a new series, Starfleet Academy's San Francisco campus has been part of the *Star Trek* Universe for decades—from major plotlines in *The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine* to video games in the 1990s; Tawny Newsome joked with Screen Rant that she's "trying to appear on every single *Star Trek* series" and is going to write herself into *Starfleet Academy*: "I'll just show up on set in a full Bolian prosthetic."

REVENGE IS A DISH BEST SERVED COLD: THE CETI ALPHA V PODCAST

Ever since writer-director Nicholas Meyer returned to the *Star Trek* franchise in 2017 for the first season of *Discovery*, rumors have swirled that they may reboot the most famous villain of all: Khan Noonien Singh. First played by Ricardo Montalbán (right) in the classic *The Original Series* episode "Space Seed," the true legacy of Khan comes from the 1982 film—directed by Meyer—*Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*. Between "Space Seed" and *Star Trek II*, Khan's exile drove him mad, leading to his infamous revenge against Kirk. But how did he get that way? Initially planned as a live-action miniseries, the story of Khan's exile has morphed into a surprising medium.

Instead of coming back to live-action TV in a *Wrath of Khan* prequel miniseries, Khan will be heard but not seen in an original podcast. On Star Trek Day, Sept. 8, 2022, Meyer announced that the story of Khan's exile on Ceti Alpha V would be told in audio form. *Star Trek* Universe producer Alex Kurtzman praised the director, saying that "he's come up with something as surprising, gripping and emotional as the original, and it's a real honor to be able to let him tell the next chapter in this story exactly the way he wants to."

As of press time, the writing of the podcast story is presumably finished, though no casting has been announced. When the Ceti Alpha V podcast drops, it will be the first time the *Star Trek* canon will be expanded exclusively in the realm of sound.

Oscar winner Michelle Yeoh will come storming back in *Section 31*, a stand-alone, straight-to-streaming movie on Paramount+. By Ryan Britt

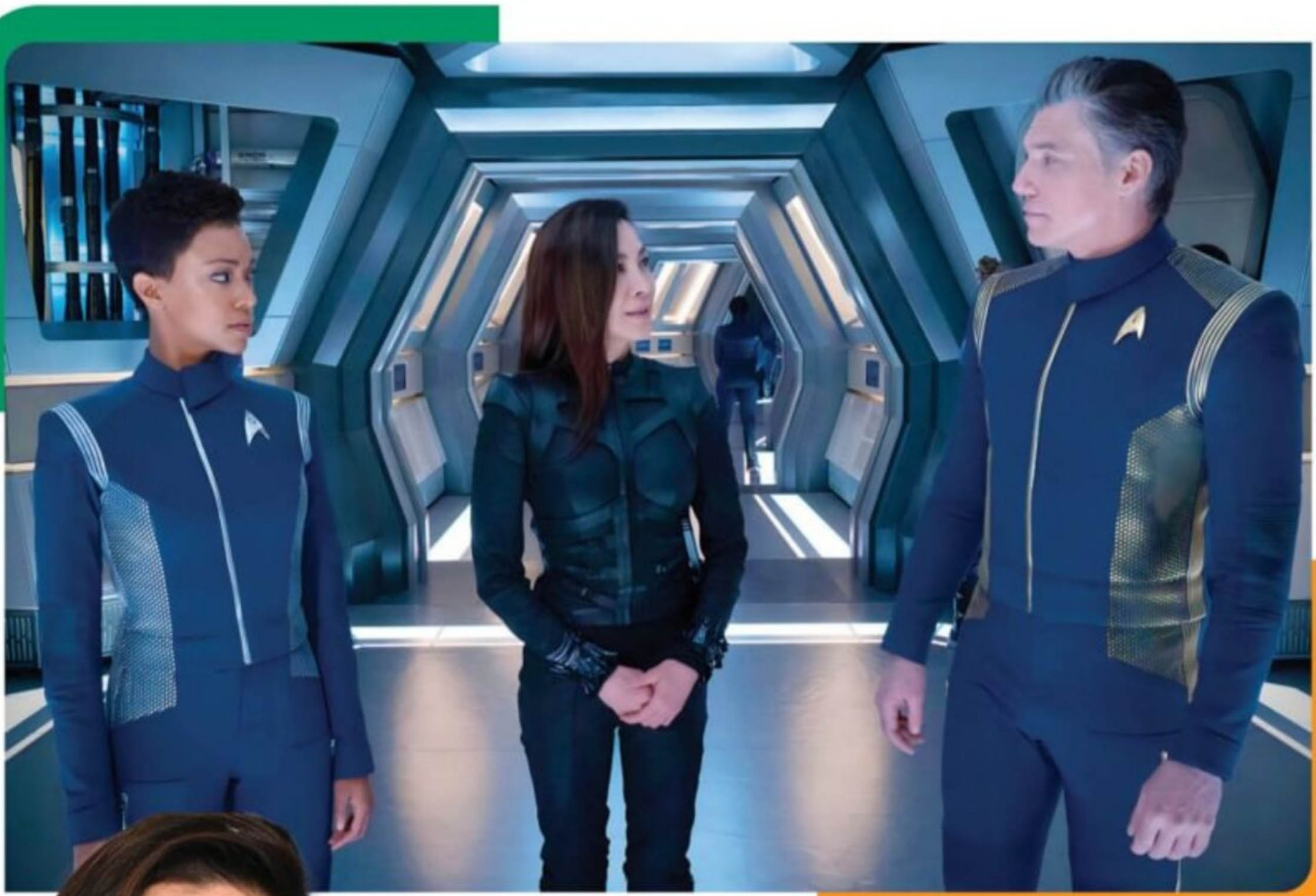
Although Michelle Yeoh played a dual role in *Star Trek: Discovery*—that of Capt. Philippa Georgiou and her Mirror Universe counterpart, the ruthless Emperor Georgiou—she appeared much more in that second role than the first. From *Discovery* Season 1 to Season 3, Mirror Georgiou went on quite the journey, hopping from the evil universe to the "Prime" universe, and then, along with the rest of the crew, jumping ahead 930 years into the future. By the middle of Season 3, it was clear that Georgiou was a woman out of time.

After stepping into *Star Trek*'s classic time portal, the Guardian of Forever (introduced in 1967), Georgiou vanished into her own spinoff! While we don't know where and when Yeoh's formidable anti-hero will emerge, one thing is clear: She's coming back soon. Although initially announced as a spinoff series in 2019, *Section 31* will instead be a stand-alone, straight-to-streaming movie on Paramount+. In April 2023—one month after Yeoh won the Best Actress Oscar for *Everything Everywhere All at Once*—the film was confirmed.

THE EVIL QUEEN R

Michelle Yeoh can be seen whispering to an unknown character in the first photo released from *Section 31*. She described the film to *Variety* as "*Mission: Impossible* in space."

ETURNS



From top, from left: Michael Burnham (Sonequa Martin-Green), Georgiou (Michelle Yeoh) and Capt. Pike (Anson Mount) in *Discovery*; Yeoh came up with the idea of a spinoff in 2017. "*Section 31* has been near and dear to my heart since I began the journey of playing Philippa," she said in a statement.

Actress Oscar for *Everything Everywhere All at Once*—the film was confirmed.

"Michelle is just the most extraordinary person on every level," *Star Trek* Universe producer Alex Kurtzman said at the *Star Trek* panel at New York Comic Con in October. "She had one of the most unbelievable years that anybody could ever have in the history of ever, and she had a million opportunities to hit the jackpot on it and do other things. And what she did with all of the power she had accrued is make sure that *Section 31* was moving forward."

Shooting began at the end of January 2024, with Kurtzman saying, "And we're off to the races! Thrilled to report principal photography has started on *Star Trek: Section 31*." But what will the film be about? The title comes from the name of the clandestine Starfleet secret agent squad that carries out sanctioned, yet often morally dubious, missions. In *Discovery* Season 2, Georgiou was recruited into Section 31, following her exile from the Mirror Universe. Introduced in the *Deep Space Nine* Season 6 episode "Inquisition," the idea of Section 31 represents a darker side of *Star Trek*'s upbeat future, providing a kind of gritty counterpoint to some of the typical Starfleet idealism.

As of now, because we don't know which time period Georgiou ended up in, we also don't know which version of Section 31 she'll be a part of. With this concept, Yeoh could emerge in any era of the franchise, and conceivably visit the entire franchise… everywhere, all at once.

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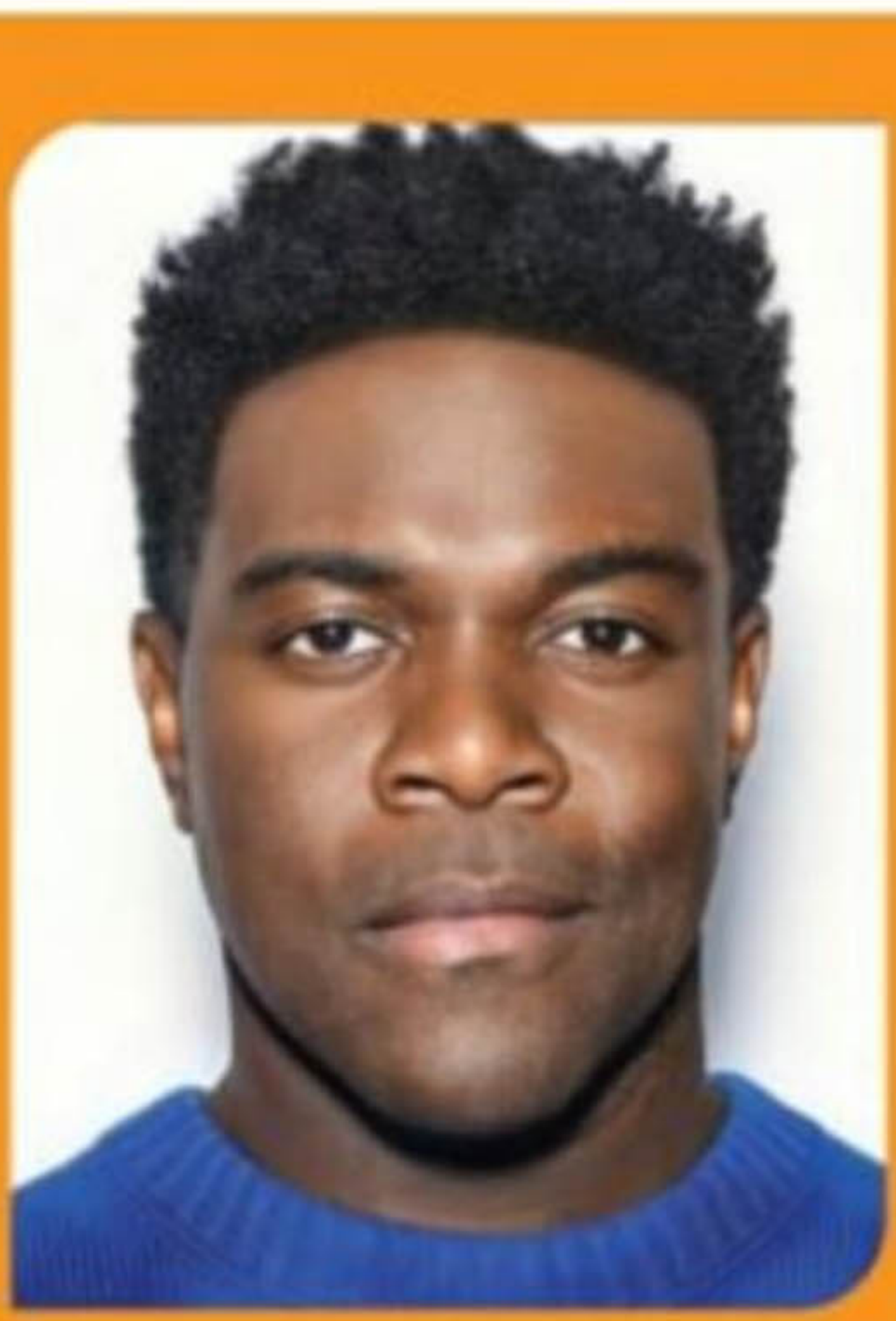
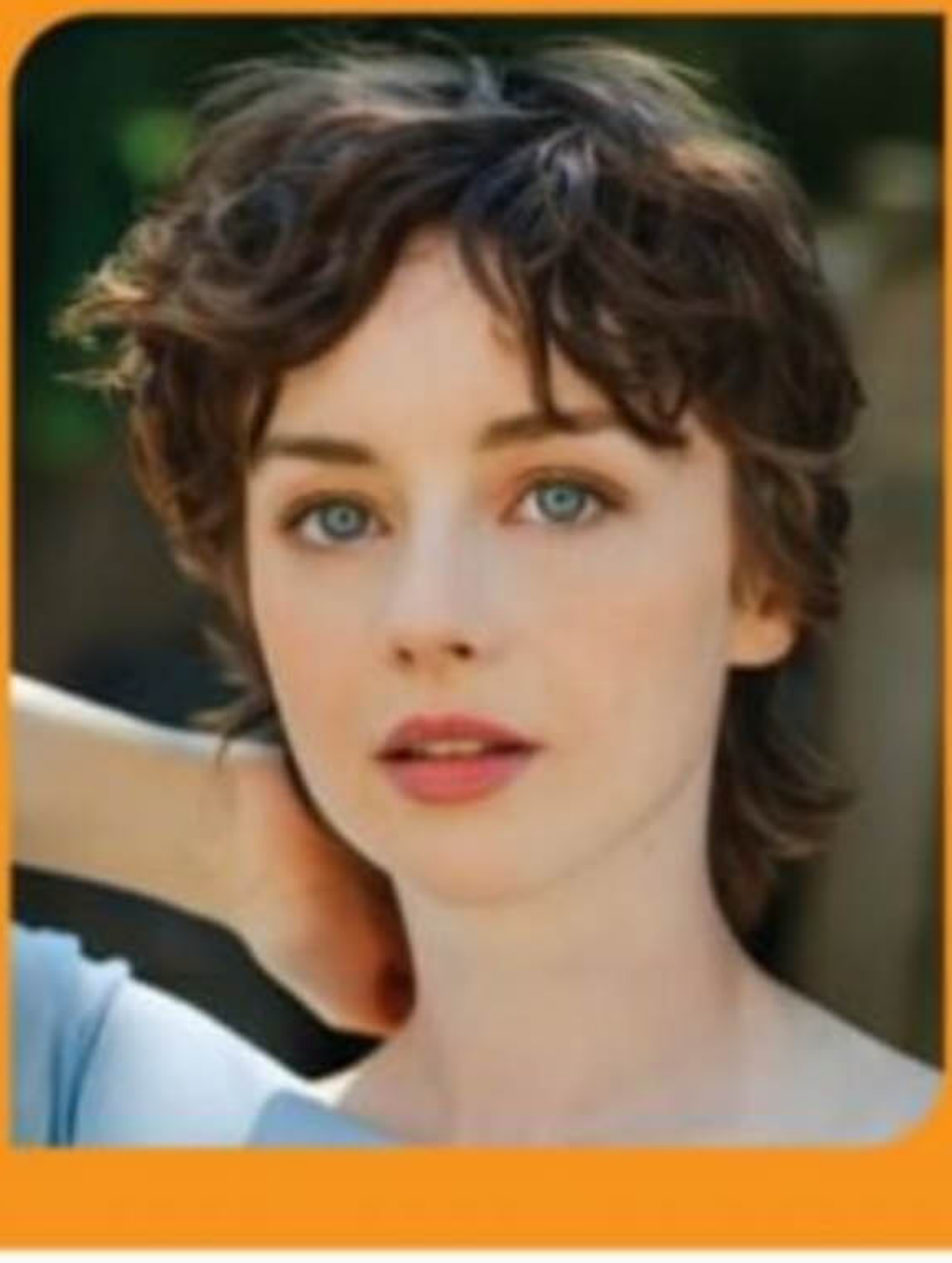
STAR TREK
SECTION 31
DIRECTOR: OLATUNDE OSUNSANMI
CAMERA: GLEN KEENAN CSC



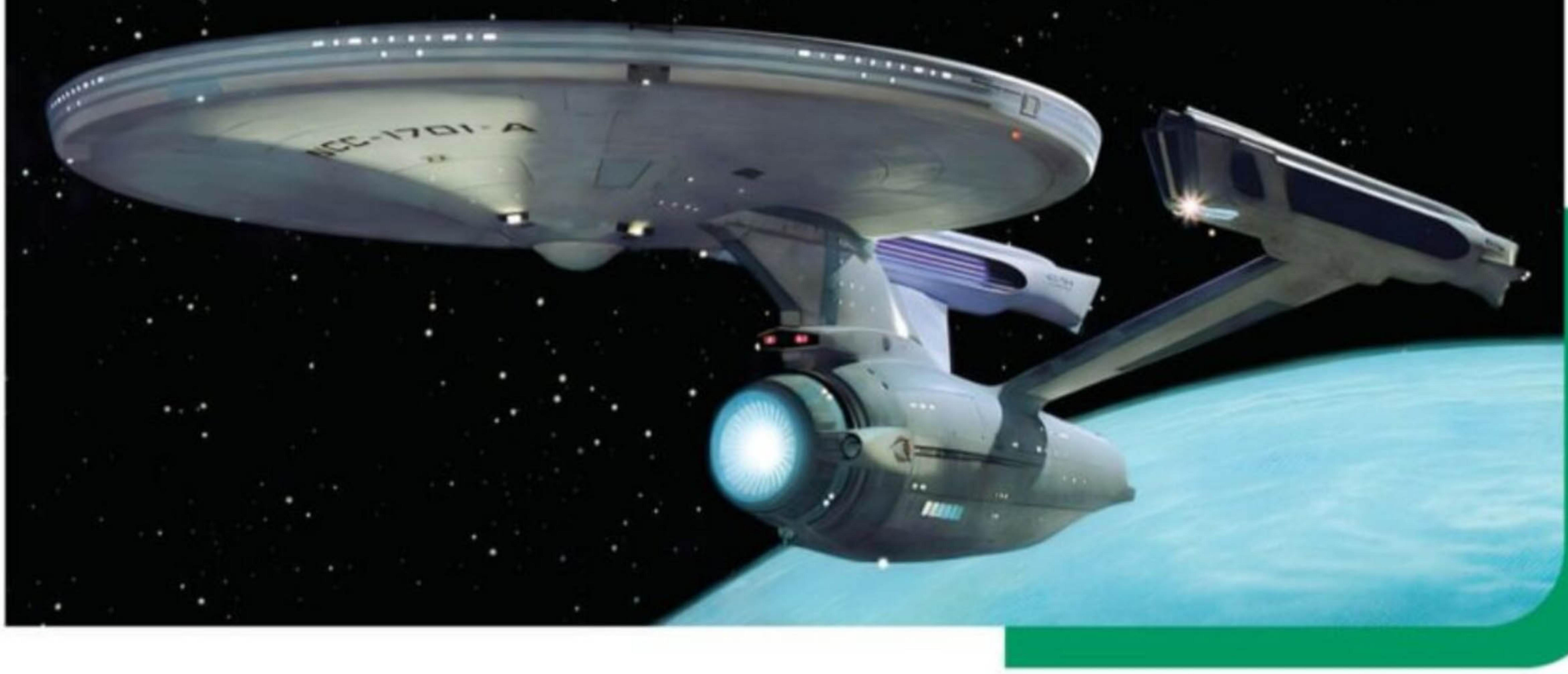


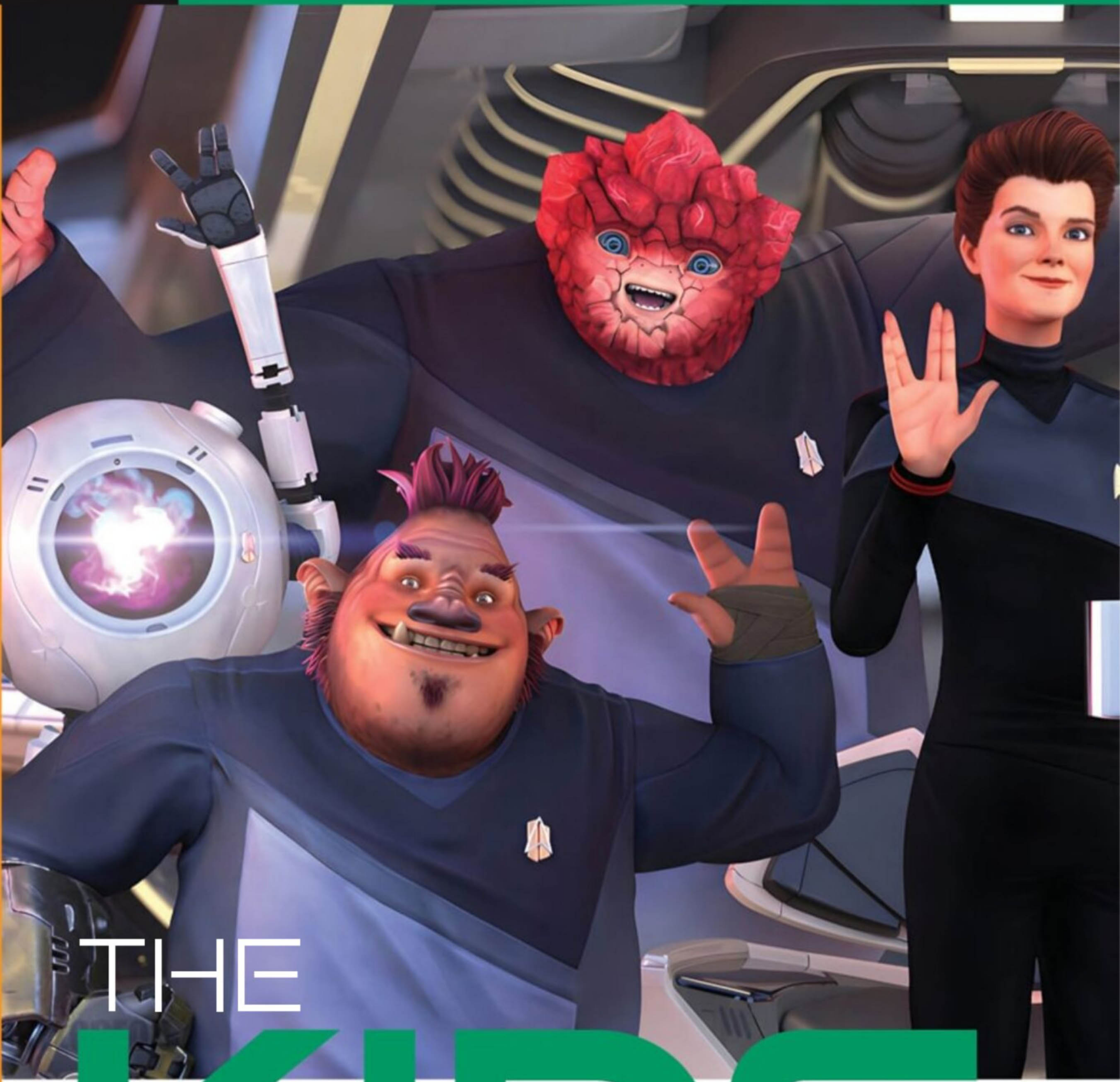
Joining the Cast
Yeoh (far left) shared a pic from the first day of shooting in January. Rounding out the cast are (clockwise from top left) Emmy winner Sam Richardson, *Barry* actor James Hiroyuki Liao and *Hannibal*'s Kacey Rohl. Sven Ruygrok, Humberly González, *EastEnders* star Robert Kazinsky and *Power*'s Omari Hardwick have also signed on to play undisclosed roles.

PHASE 2 MATERIALIZES

What's in store for the next era of *Star Trek* at Paramount+?

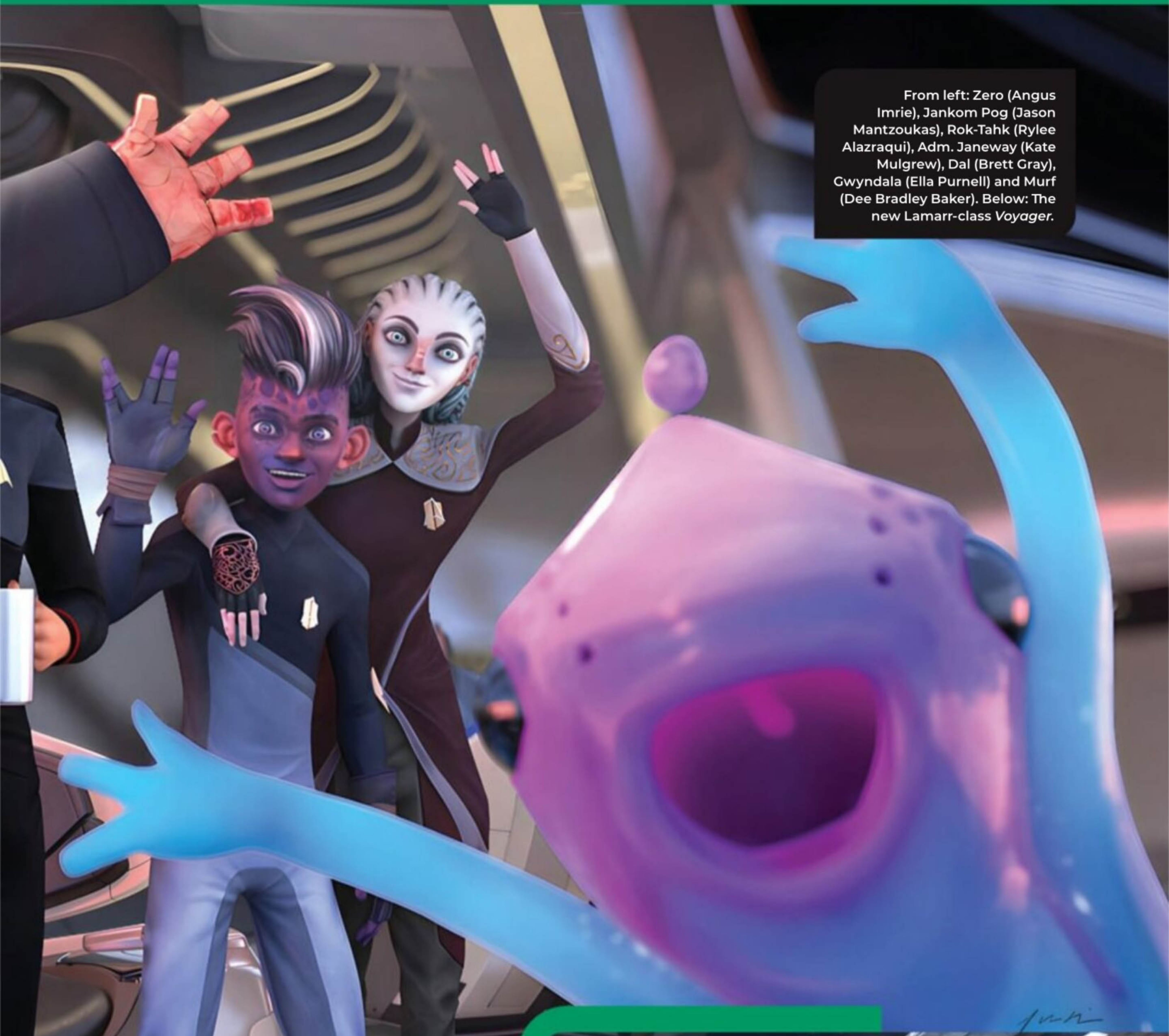
With the announcement of the *Section 31* movie, sources at *The Hollywood Reporter* confirmed in April 2023 that this project will represent a shift into Phase 2 for the reborn *Star Trek* franchise. Reportedly, producer Alex Kurtzman wants to transition to a point where there is a new tent pole *Star Trek* streaming movie in production at all times. Although *Section 31* was set to begin filming in late 2023, that start date was delayed by the WGA and SAG strikes. When the direct-to-streaming movie is finally released, it could kick off a newer, and leaner, *Star Trek* Universe on streaming. Instead of multiple series airing at the same time, it's possible the future will see one or two shows, while a major movie event beams down every other year.





THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

Prodigy's big Season 2 comeback will see the gang in a new ship—and on a new streaming platform. By Ryan Britt



From left: Zero (Angus Imrie), Jankom Pog (Jason Mantzoukas), Rok-Tahk (Rylee Alazraqui), Adm. Janeway (Kate Mulgrew), Dal (Brett Gray), Gwyndala (Ella Purnell) and Murf (Dee Bradley Baker). Below: The new Lamarr-class *Voyager.*

Star Trek: Prodigy aimed to take the world of the Final Frontier to a younger audience when it debuted in 2021. Co-produced by Paramount and Nickelodeon, the show was created by brothers Kevin and Dan Hageman, who co-wrote the first *Lego Movie* and had a hit with the animated series *Trollhunters*.

In many ways, *Prodigy* was the riskiest launch of all the new *Trek* shows. The intention of the show was to introduce young kids—from the age of about 7 and up—to the

> “[SEASON 2 IS] MUCH BIGGER. SEASON 1 WAS KIDS ON A LITTLE SHIP. THIS IS KIDS ON A BIG SHIP.”
>
> ***PRODIGY*** CO-CREATOR DAN HAGEMAN

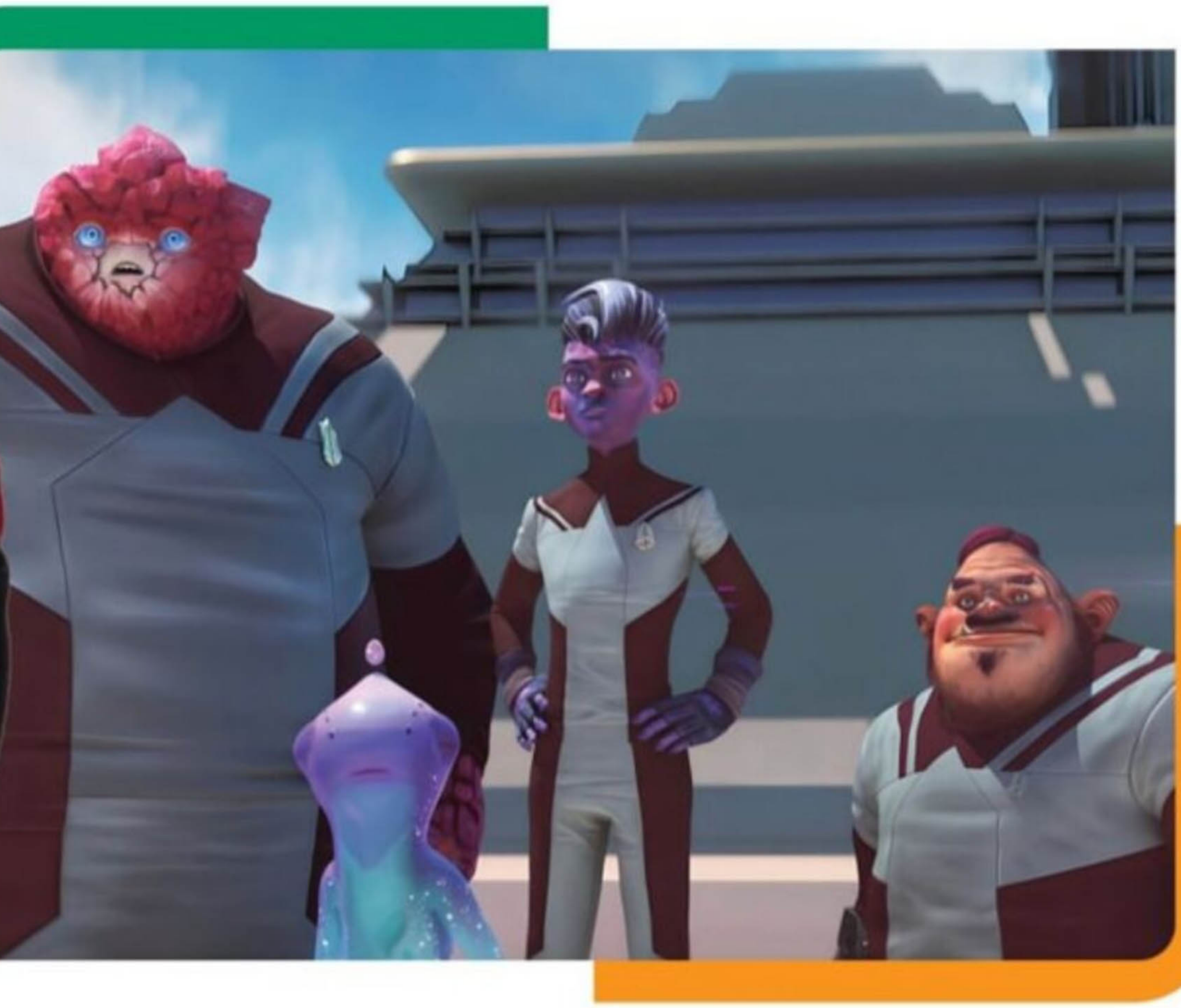
Star Trek Universe, albeit slowly. To that end, the series didn't begin in the familiar space of the Federation. Instead, we followed a group of orphaned teenage aliens escaping a mining colony in the Delta Quadrant.

If the Delta Quadrant sounds familiar, that's because Capt. Kathryn Janeway (Kate Mulgrew) and the crew got stuck there in *Star Trek: Voyager*. In fact, *Prodigy* is a bit of a *Voyager* sequel, co-starring two versions of Janeway, both voiced by Mulgrew. The first is a holograph who assists the kids as a kind teacher and space nanny; the second Janeway is the same one we remember from *Voyager*, now an admiral in Starfleet, who was determined to get back a missing, experimental starship—the USS *Protostar*.

Yep, like *The Boxcar Children* in space, the kids of *Prodigy* were on the run in a borrowed ship. Throughout the 20 episodes of the first season, the gang (voiced by Brett Gray, Ella Purnell, Jason Mantzoukas, Dee Bradley Baker, Angus Imrie and Rylee Alazraqui) inched their way closer to Federation space, learning about the ideals of Starfleet along the way. And, by the end of Season 1, the *Protostar* and hologram Janeway were destroyed.

A four-minute teaser for Season 2 revealed a new ship—the Lamarr-class USS *Voyager-A*—as well as more familiar *Voyager* characters. Robert Picardo's holographic Doctor is playing a similar mentor role as hologram Janeway did in Season 1. The gang are now warrant Starfleet officers in training, interning under Janeway, who has been asked to observe a new wormhole and determine if it poses a threat (it's the same wormhole the kids created when they self-destructed the *Protostar* in Season 1). A probe also picked up an SOS transmission from Janeway's friend Capt. Chakotay (played by Robert Beltran in *Voyager*) on the other side, on the planet Solum—52 years in the future—setting up an alternate-future rescue mission.

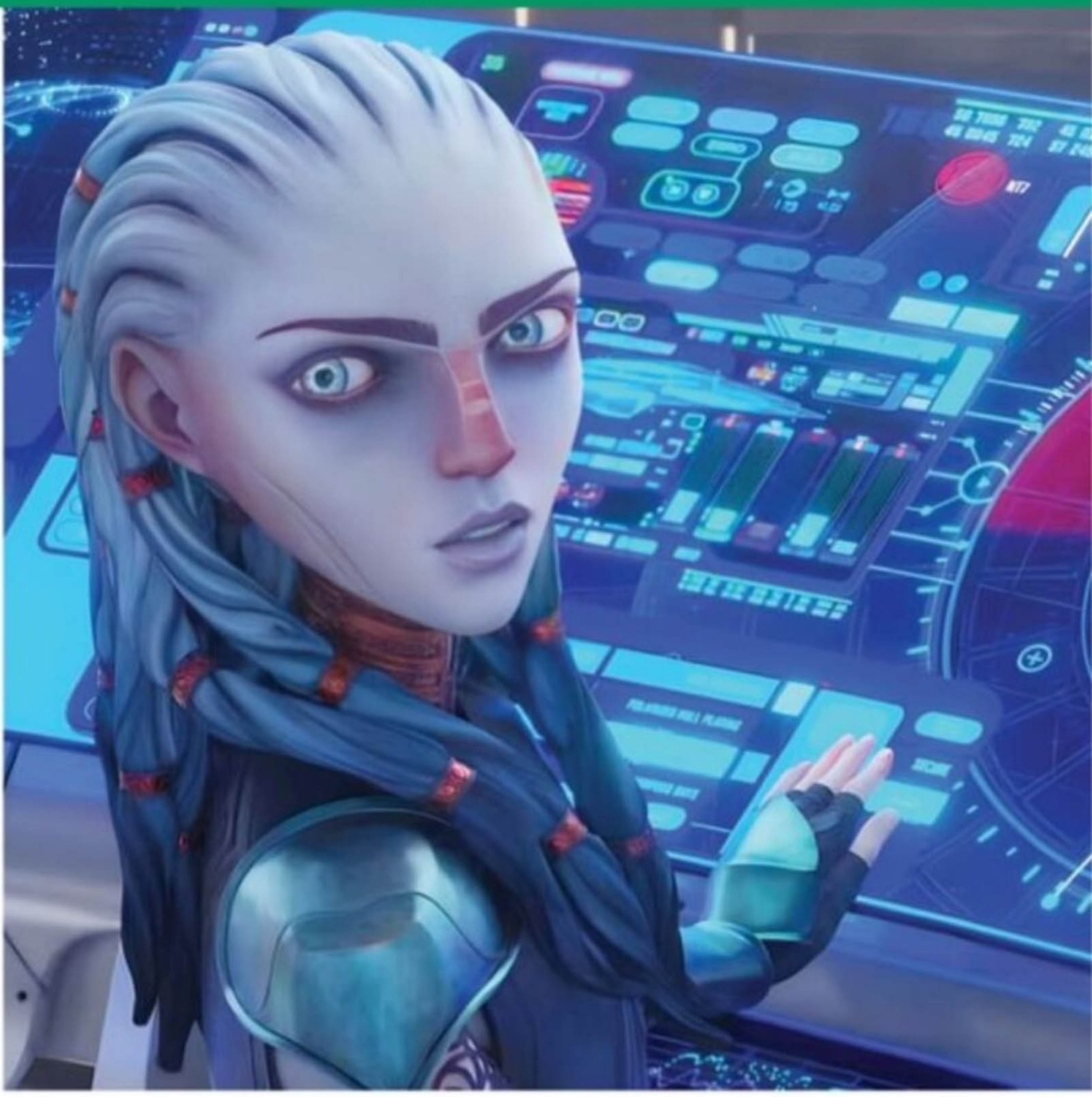
Writer-executive producer Aaron J. Waltke teased Season 2 on X (formerly known as Twitter) in September 2023, writing, “Recently

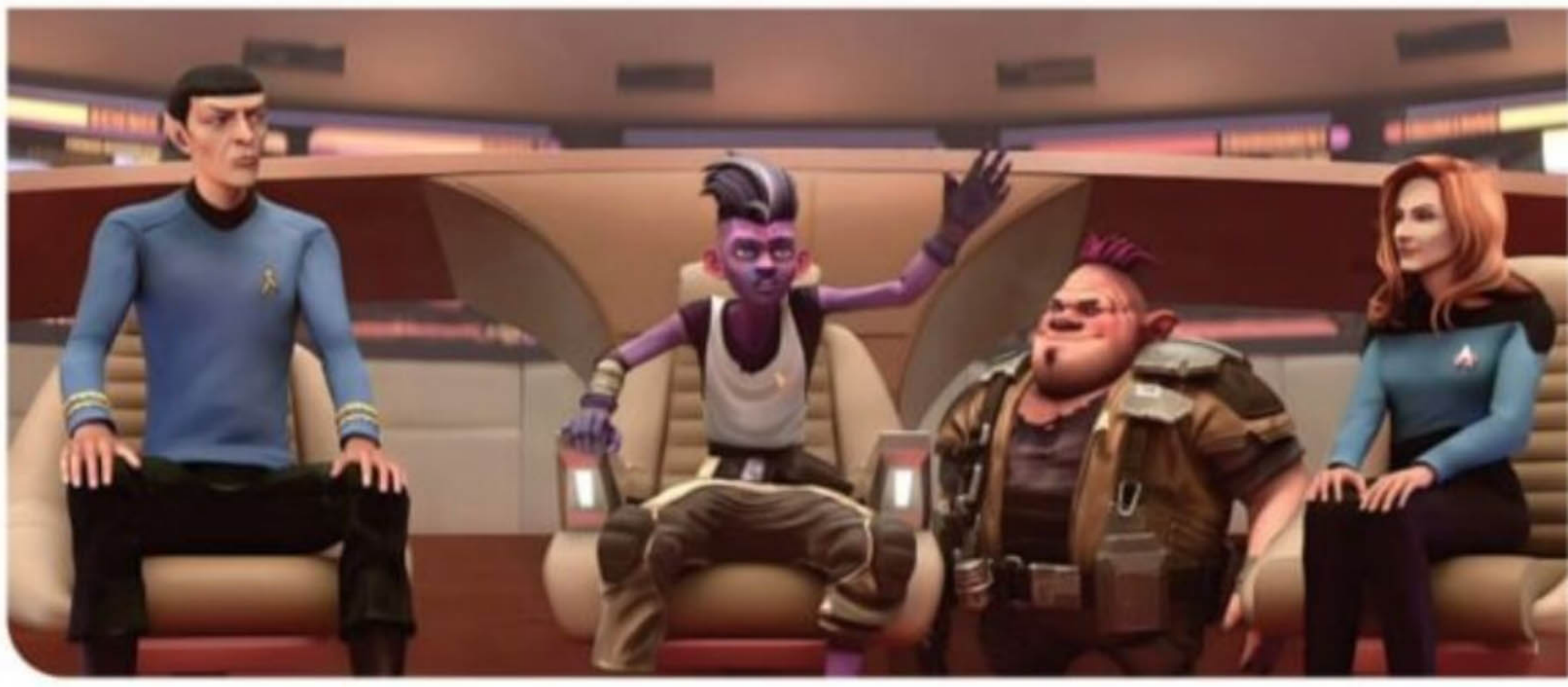


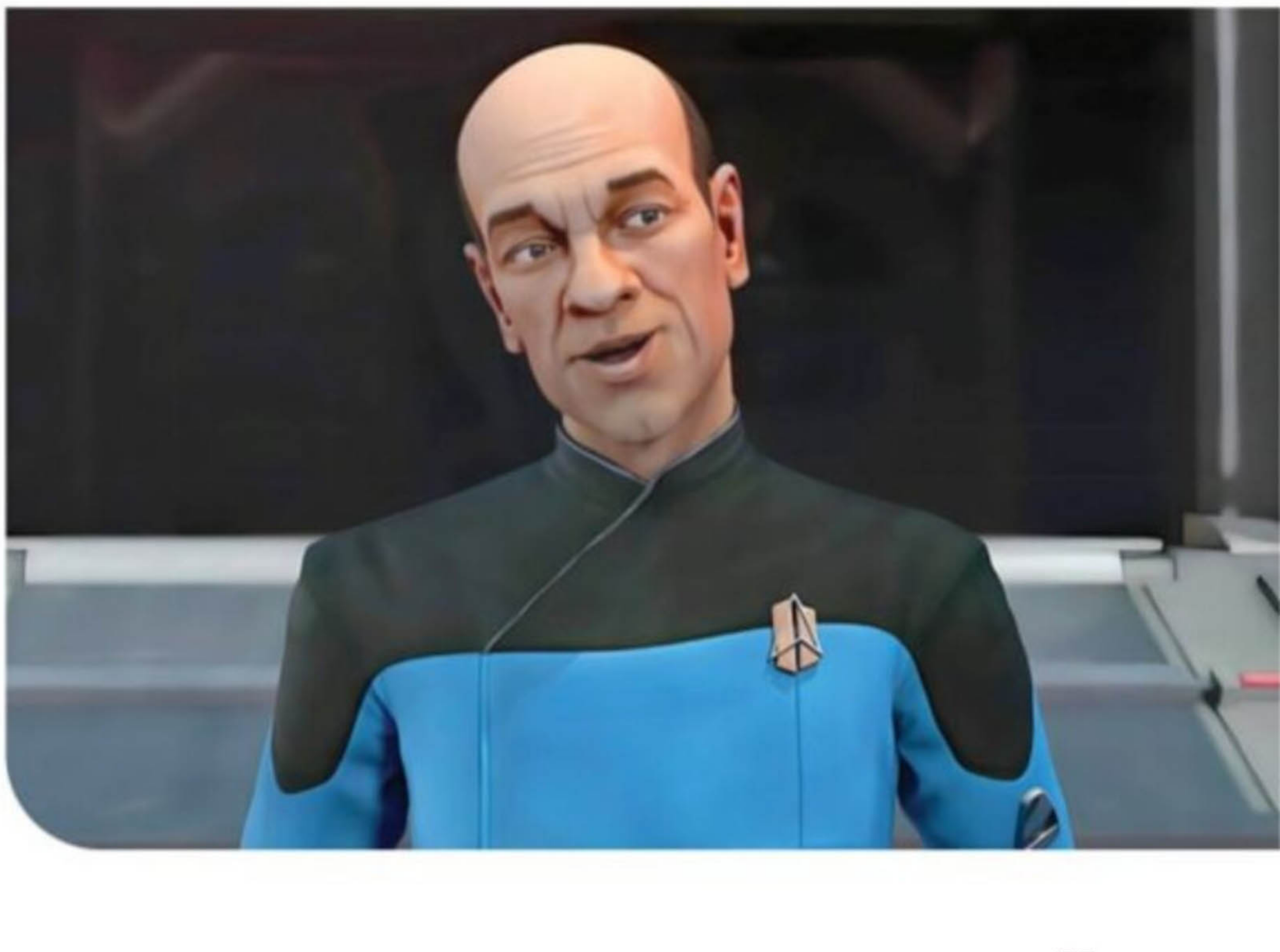
watched the final mix for another episode of #*StarTrekProdigy* Season 2—one that finally explores the aftermath of one of the most fascinating rivalries in the franchise's history. You are not prepared." In a follow-up, he added, "It certainly features rivals. And voices! 'Rivals' can mean many things, given its plurality..."

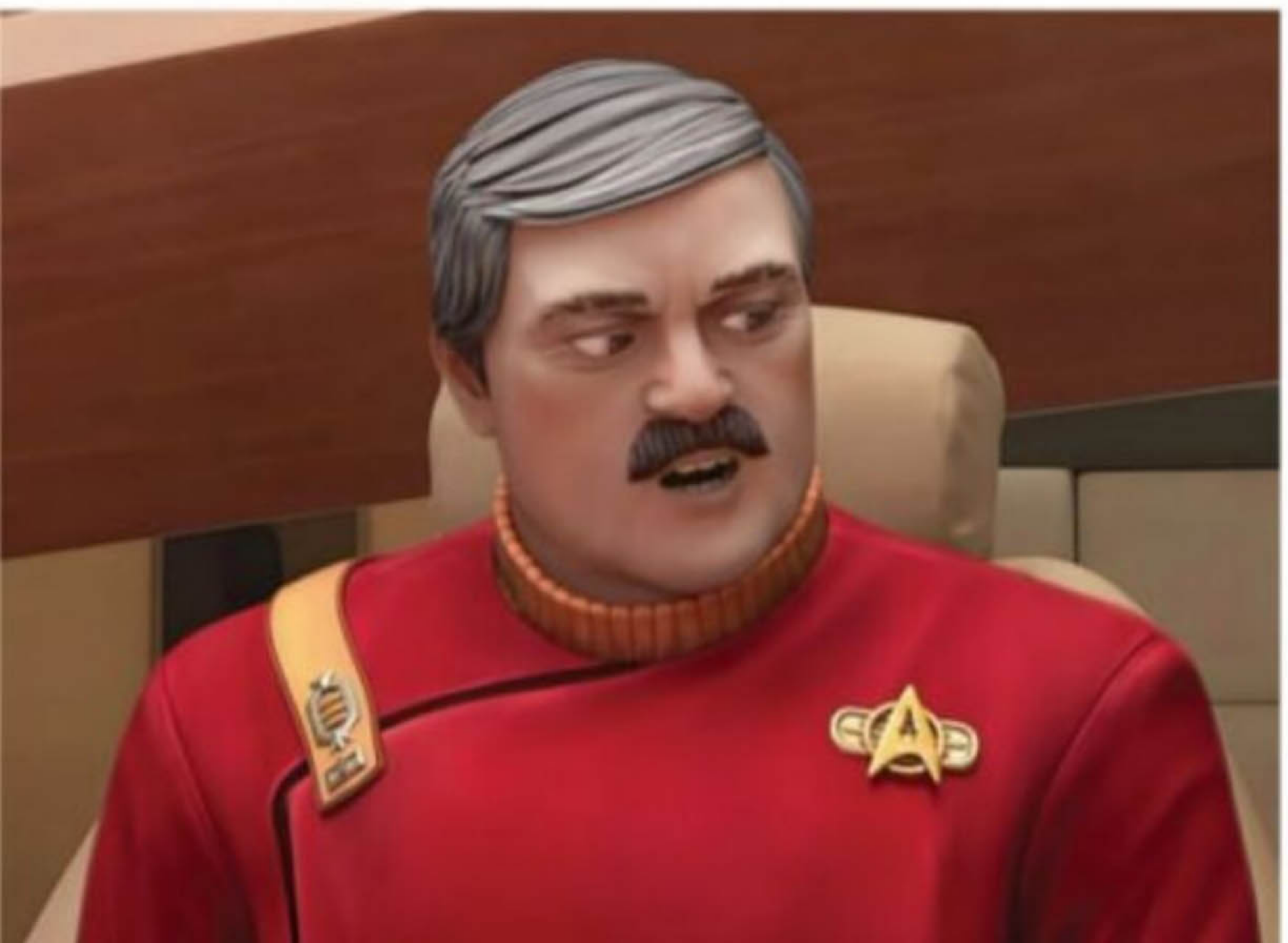
So when will Season 2 air? In June 2023, *Prodigy* was pulled from Paramount+, which led to the assumption that the series had been canceled. Fans rallied, with nearly 34,000 signing an online petition, while others flew a #Save*StarTrekProdigy* banner over the LA headquarters of several streaming services. Their efforts paid off in October, when the rights to stream *Prodigy* Season 1—and the new season—moved to Netflix, with the streamer announcing that Season 2 will debut in 2024.

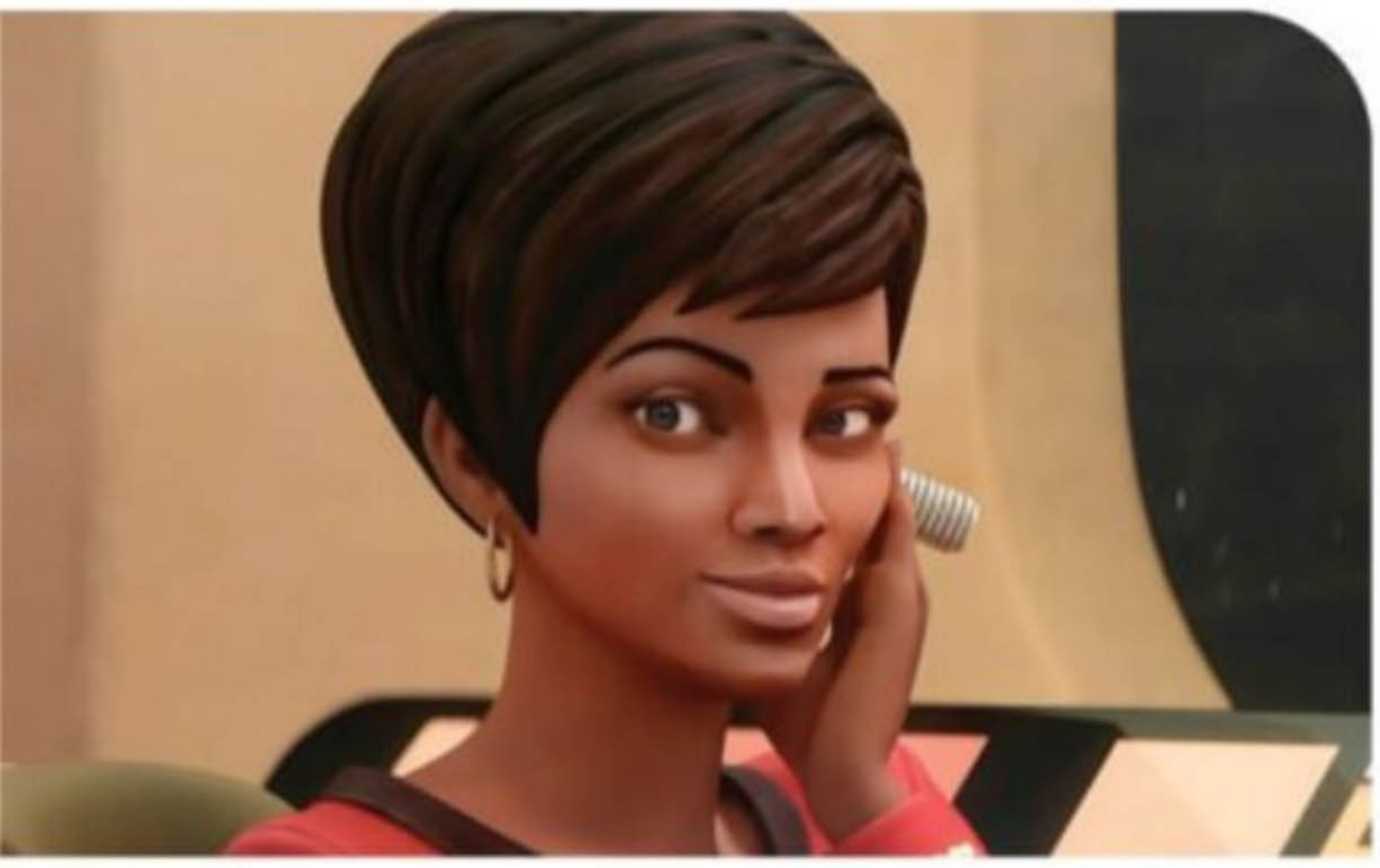
"It's a grand adventure," co-creator Kevin Hageman told Screen Rant of the upcoming season. "I think when you watch all 20 [episodes] of Season 2, you're gonna feel like Season 1 and Season 2 is a 40-episode saga."











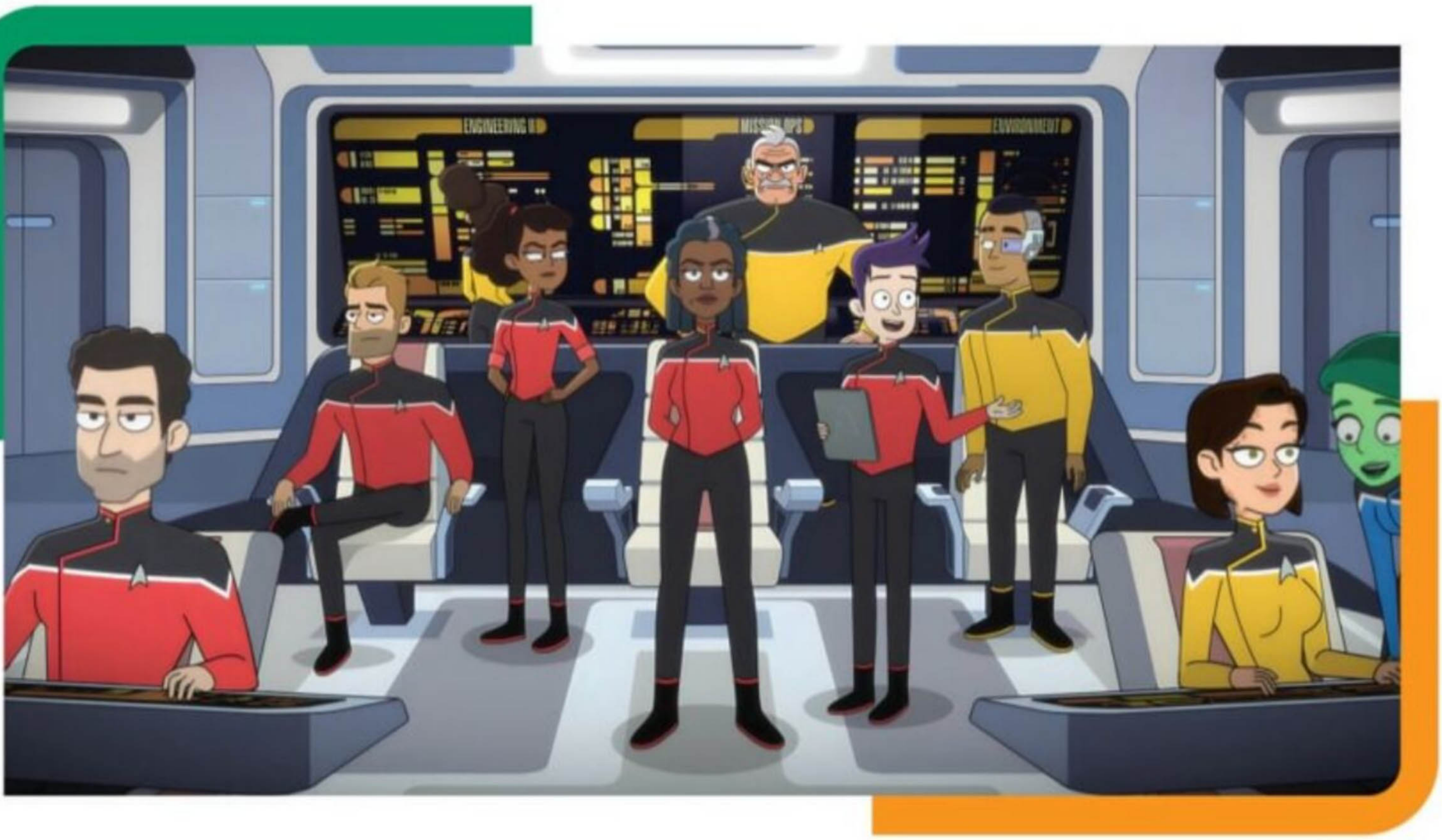
Clockwise from top right: Gwyndala takes charge; Season 1's "Kobayashi"—aka "the Trekkiest Trek that ever Trekked"—had cameos by Spock and Beverly Crusher; Robert Picardo's Doctor joins Season 2; *The Original Series*' Scotty and Uhura have also made an appearance; the gang in their Starfleet uniforms; Kate Mulgrew voices two versions of her *Voyager* character.

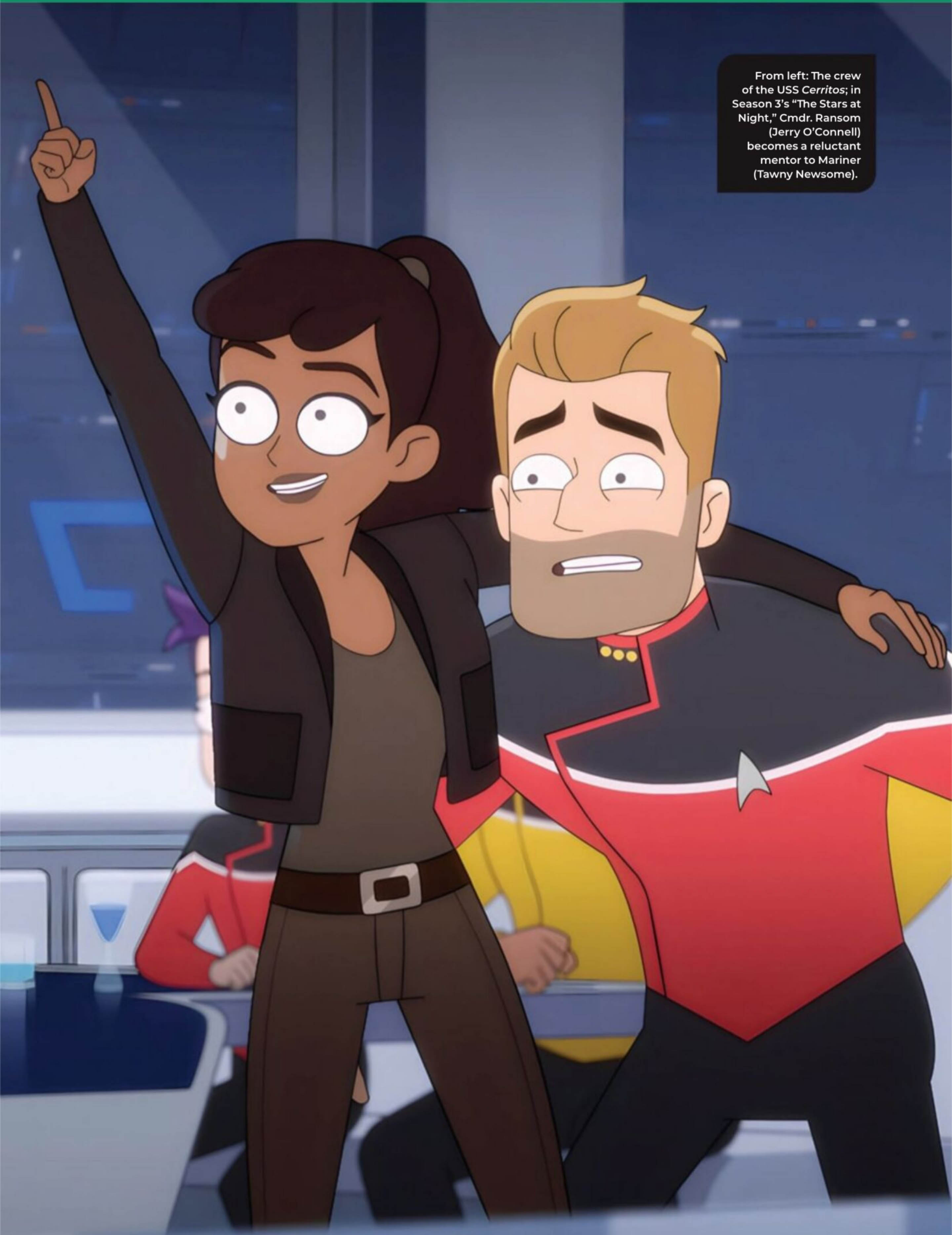
THE LITTLE STARSHIP THAT COULD

Lower Decks' fifth season will feature some "fun legacy characters," series creator Mike McMahan revealed.

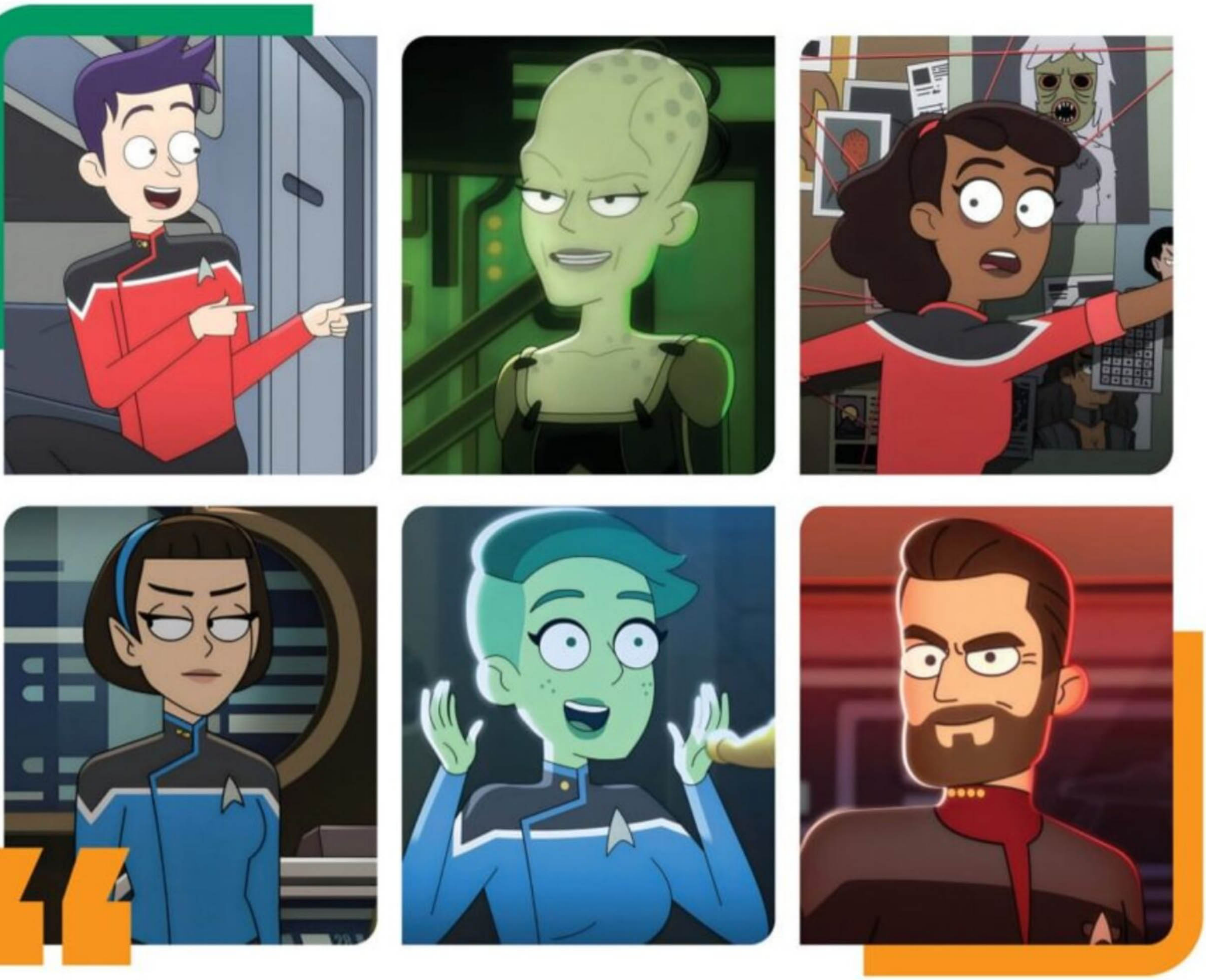
By Ryan Britt

Launched in 2020, between *Picard* Season 1 and *Discovery* Season 3, the animated adult comedy series *Star Trek: Lower Decks* was a curious detour for the adventures of Starfleet. Instead of focusing on the people in charge of a starship or space station, *Lower Decks* champions the machinations of the lowest-ranking officers. Inspired by *The Next Generation* episode of the same name, *Lower Decks* was created by comedy writer Mike McMahan—who wrote for *Rick and Morty*—and the ethos of the show is designed to honor the format of *The Next Generation*, *Voyager*, *Deep Space Nine* and *Enterprise*. To that end, much of *Lower Decks* features self-contained episodes. In 2022, McMahan told trekmovie.com that in his favorite kinds of *Star Trek* episodes, "I like to feel like things are resolved and that





From left: The crew of the USS *Cerritos*; in Season 3's "The Stars at Night," Cmdr. Ransom (Jerry O'Connell) becomes a reluctant mentor to Mariner (Tawny Newsome).



"I'M NOT A BIG FAN OF TIME TRAVEL [BUT] THERE'S A LITTLE *ENTERPRISE* LOVE IN SEASON 5, FOR SURE."

SERIES CREATOR MIKE McMAHAN

Clockwise from top left: Some regulars and two just passing through—Brad Boimler (voiced by Jack Quaid, son of actors Meg Ryan and Dennis Quaid); the Borg Queen (Alice Krige) was a Season 2 guest; Beckett Mariner (Tawny Newsome); Capt. Riker (Jonathan Frakes) was a special guest in Seasons 1 and 2; D'Vana Tendi (Noël Wells); T'Lyn (Gabrielle Ruiz).

the stuff that we saw on that episode doesn't rely on you having to wait to see more."

While the initial reception to *Lower Decks* in 2020 was mixed, this underdog series (which is literally about underdogs) has grown into a fan favorite over the past three years, particularly among those who are attached to the '90s-era *Star Trek*.

Crucially, *Lower Decks* isn't a spoof and actually takes place in the real *Trek* canon, meaning the characters and events still have to make sense with the rest of the complex *Trek* timeline. This fact became a big deal in 2023 when characters from *Lower Decks*—Brad Boimler (Jack Quaid) and Beckett Mariner (Tawny Newsome)—crossed over to the live-action series *Strange New Worlds* in the episode "Those Old Scientists." And to date, *Lower Decks* has featured cameos from a slew of legacy *Trek* actors including John de Lancie, Jonathan Frakes, Marina Sirtis, James Cromwell, Alice Krige, Robert Duncan McNeill, Chase Masterson, Max Grodénchik, Lycia Naff and George Takei.

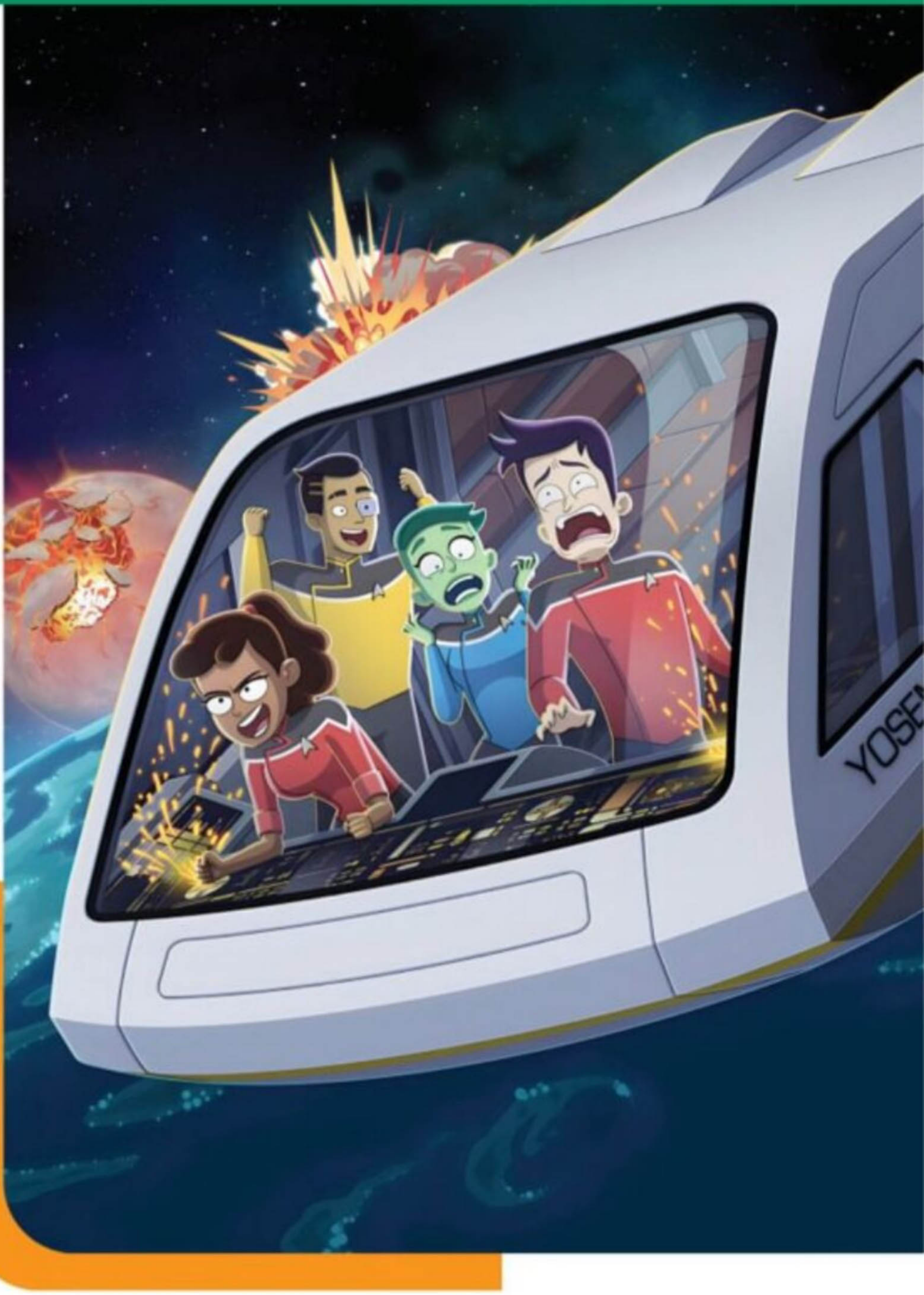
In 2023, *Lower Decks* aired its fourth season, which introduced a season-long mystery while still retaining the episodic nature of the show. Now, the beloved ensigns have all been promoted to junior-grade lieutenants. They're still lower-ranking officers, but if this keeps happening, how long can the series go on? McMahan says it all depends on how much the fans support the show. In 2023 he told Inverse, "We do these seasons a year in advance. So the only trick here is early and consistent viewership.... If people want more *Lower*

Decks, they've got to tune in and get a couple of other people to tune in."

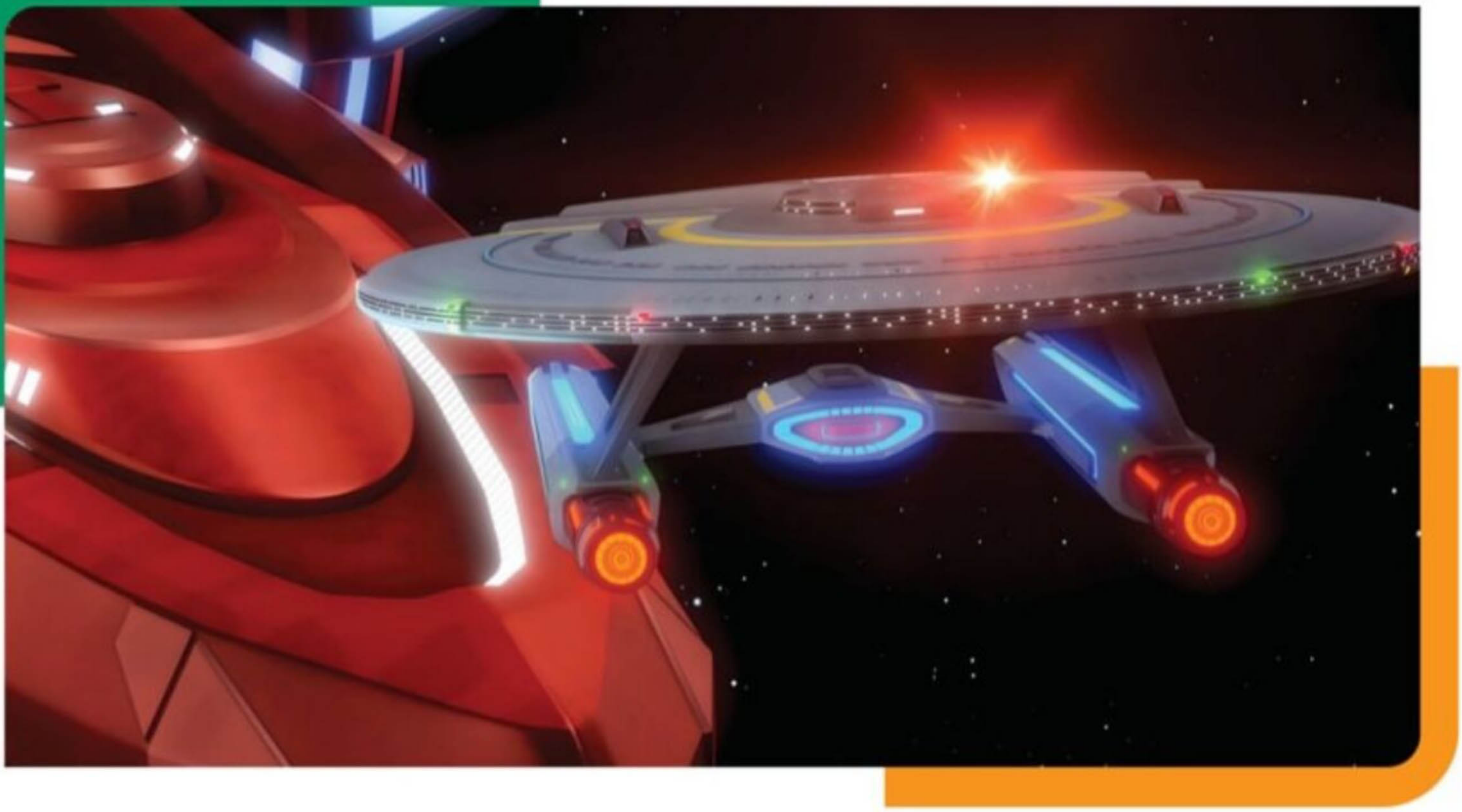
Season 4 ended with D'Vana Tendi (Noël Wells) offering herself as a bartering prize while negotiating with her sister on Orion in an effort to rescue Mariner. As a result, she was forced to leave the USS *Cerritos* in the last moments of the season finale. But in an interview with Collider, McMahan insisted that, "You'll be seeing a lot of Tendi in Season 5. We are not losing Tendi."

In other developments, Mariner "is much more joyful" in the upcoming season, while Vulcan T'Lyn (Gabrielle Ruiz) has decided to stay with the *Cerritos*, which McMahan said leads to "some really, really fun, funny stuff for her in Season 5.... T'Lyn's story in Season 5 involves her and another character in an interesting way, and you see T'Lyn embrace science and Starfleet more than I think people anticipate.

"Season 5 is incredibly *Star Trek*. A couple of fun legacy characters will show up," McMahan concluded. "Everything you like about *Lower Decks*, you're still gonna get, just more of it in ways that you haven't seen before and it's really fun." 🖖



"My job a lot of the time is, 'How am I going to surprise the audience? How do they not know what's coming?'" series creator Mike McMahan told startrek.com of mixing action, drama and comedy, as seen in Season 4 (right) and Season 2 (below).



Director J.J. Abrams insists the crew of the *Enterprise*—Kirk (Chris Pine), Uhura (Zoe Saldana), Spock (Zachary Quinto), Scotty (Simon Pegg) and McCoy (Karl Urban)—is set to return.

IS STAR *TREK 4* LOST IN MOVIE

We've been waiting eight years, but reports of a new origin story set decades before the trilogy has fans feeling hopeful. By Ryan Britt

SPACE?

Clockwise from above: Director J.J. Abrams with the cast of his 2009 reboot; the IMAX release of that first reboot broke box-office records at the time; Quinto and Ethan Peck with moderator Scott Mantz at the STLV convention in 2023; *Picard* showrunner Terry Matalas told Screen Rant in February 2024 that he'd "kill" to get Nicolas Cage into the *Star Trek* universe: "I kind of want to make him a villain. That would be extraordinary."

The last new *Star Trek* feature film, *Star Trek Beyond*, was released way back in 2016. Although the least financially successful of the three reboots that began in 2009, *Beyond* was still widely celebrated by longtime fans as a kind of old-school comeback. While the film's version of the USS *Enterprise* was destroyed, the plot ended with the crew watching as a new version of the famous starship was built. But now, eight years later, a sequel to this film—or any new *Star Trek* feature film—has failed to materialize. Any reasonable person would have one obvious question: What's the deal with that *Star Trek* movie?

Concepts for a fourth *Star Trek* reboot film (and the 14th movie overall) have been swirling since *Beyond*. In 2022, Chris McKay, the co-writer of one of the projects, told *Esquire*: "The conceit was that through a cosmic quirk in the *Star Trek* world, they were the same age…think *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* in space. We were really thrilled about it. We had an original villain and a really cool *2001: A Space Odyssey*-esque sci-fi idea at the core."

But that film, which would have featured Chris Hemsworth reprising his role from the 2009 film as George Kirk, the father of James T., and been helmed by *Trek*'s first female director, S.J. Clarkson, eventually fizzled out, while several other possible projects have been floated. In 2019, Quentin Tarantino confirmed a gangster-oriented *Star Trek* film was still in development, although that movie also never came to fruition. In addition to those two projects, *Fargo*'s Noah Hawley and *WandaVision*'s Matt Shakman were both tapped as directors for a new *Trek* film. By 2022, it was unclear what form a new movie would take but Paramount Pictures CEO Brian Robbins did announce that the entire cast from the 2009 film would return. In a slightly concerning twist, many of the actors stated they had no idea that such an announcement was being made!

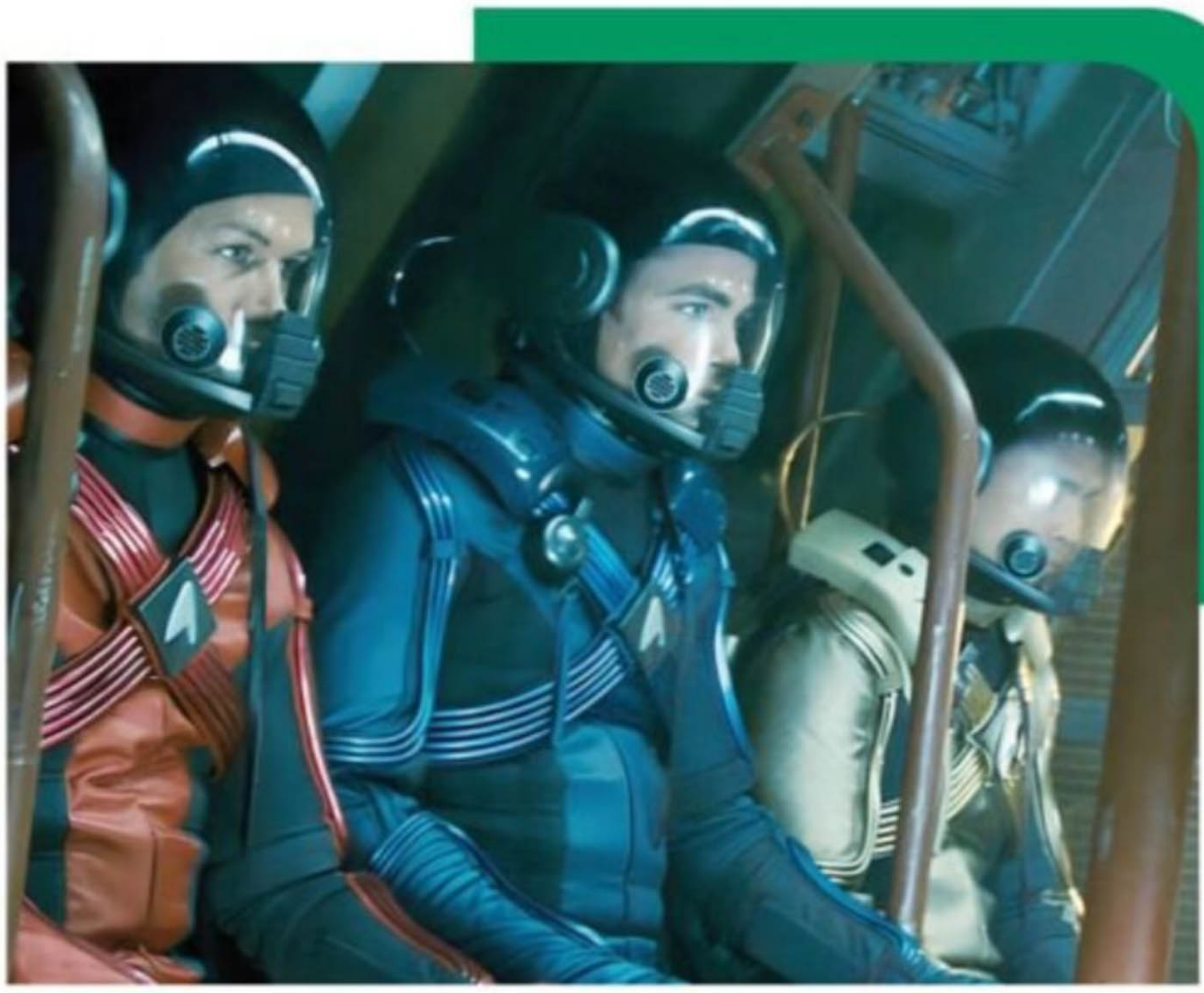
As of press time, *Star Trek 4* remained in active development. At the STLV convention in August 2023, Zachary Quinto, who played Spock in the films, offered his take on the delay, saying, "I think it's about different people having different agendas and ideas about what it will be. And I don't know if and when it will happen." While onstage with Ethan Peck—who plays Spock in *Strange New Worlds*—Quinto said he was happy to step down and pass the Vulcan ears to a new custodian.

In October 2023, *Variety* reported that Paramount was hoping to have writers "fine-tune" the script for *Star Trek 4*, which is described as the "final chapter" of the Kelvin timeline's *Enterprise* crew. It's unclear who's doing the fine-tuning or which script it is, but Lindsey Anderson Beer, who co-wrote *Star Trek Beyond* and penned a draft for a sequel, told Collider a few weeks earlier that the film was "still on the tracks" and "the seed of the idea came from J.J. himself."

Earlier in 2023, Abrams told *Esquire* of the script, "I will say it's the first time that we have a story that feels as compelling as the first one [2009's *Star Trek*]."

Could it end up starring Nicolas Cage? In February 2024, the lifelong *Star Trek* fan told Screen Rant he'd had discussions about the film, adding, "It would have to be something that I could really add my flavor to, have some pop and some spark.... I want to be on the *Enterprise*.... I don't want to be floating in space on a satellite! I want to be on the bridge."

But with no shooting date set, *Star Trek 4* might not be the next installment we see on the big screen. In January, Deadline broke the news that *Andor* director Toby Haynes had been tapped to direct a new film that expands on the *Star Trek* universe. The movie, which is being written by *The Lego Batman Movie*'s Seth Grahame-Smith, will be an origin story set decades before the 2009 film.



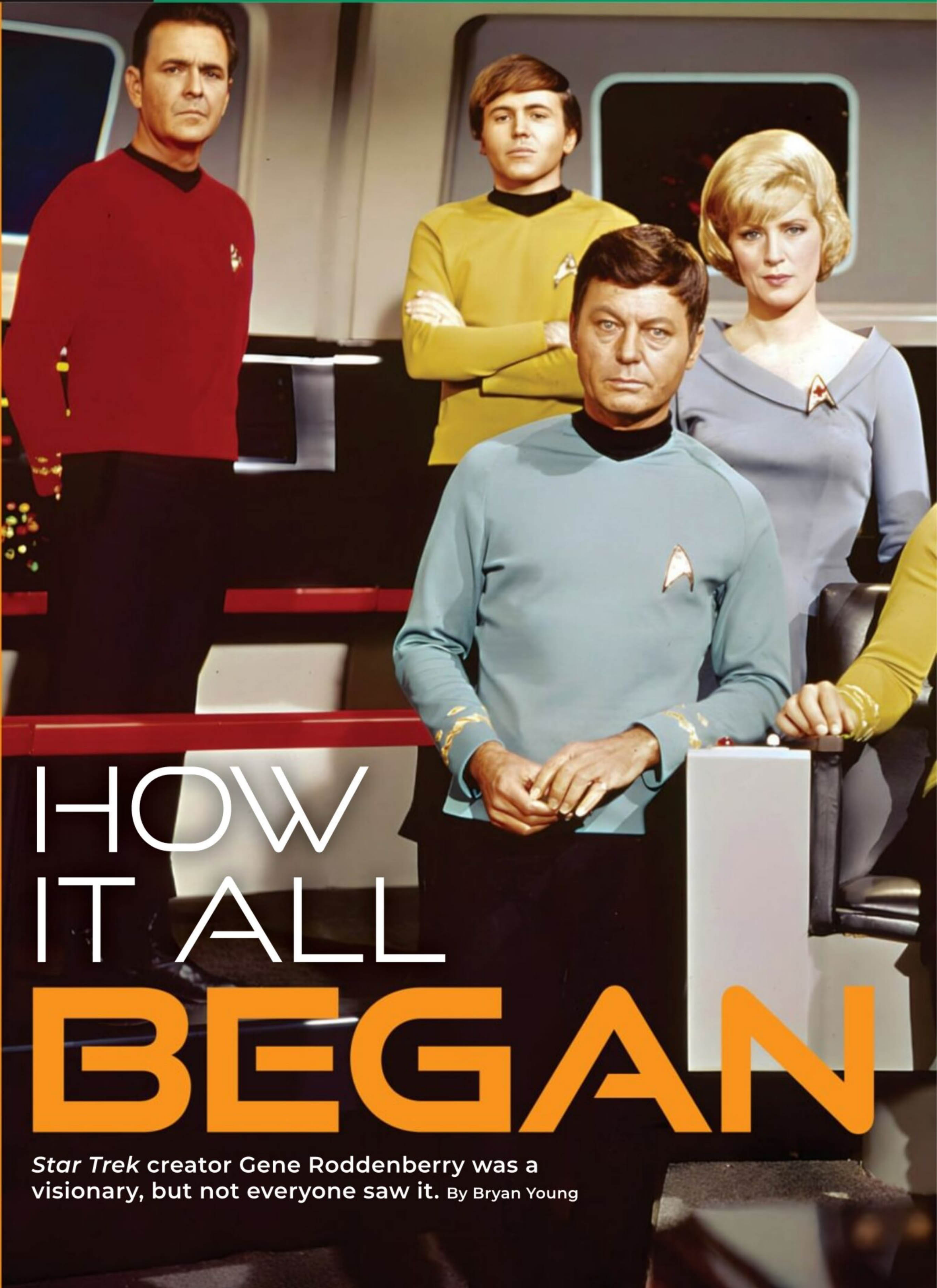
CREATION ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS
STLV: 57-YEAR MISSION LAS VEGAS
Zachary Quinto

William Shatner (right) wrote in his 2008 book *Up Till Now: The Autobiography* that Leonard Nimoy, who'd been to rehab for alcohol abuse, helped Shatner deal with his own alcohol issues. "It helped us bond together in a way I never could have imagined in the early days of *Star Trek*," Shatner wrote.

CHAPTER 2

A LOOK BACK

Remembering the iconic *The Original Series* and the TV shows and movies that boldly followed. Plus, we recall the franchise's best—and worst—couples.



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry was a visionary, but not everyone saw it. By Bryan Young

The cast, from left: James Doohan (Scotty), Walter Koenig (Chekov), DeForest Kelley (McCoy), Majel Barrett (Chapel), William Shatner (Kirk), Nichelle Nichols (Uhura), Leonard Nimoy (Spock), George Takei (Sulu).

Gene Roddenberry—the legendary television writer who created *Star Trek*—was a World War II veteran and a Los Angeles police officer before he got into TV writing. In fact, it was his job in the LAPD that put him in the world of Hollywood in the first place. As a police liaison and adviser on *Dragnet* in the 1950s, he cut his teeth writing treatments for the show based on real cases. Eventually, TV took over and Roddenberry got to work developing pilots and running shows. By the early 1960s, he'd worked on programs ranging from police procedurals to Westerns.

From his earliest days, the El Paso, Texas, native had a progressive outlook. At one point, he was hired to write a series set in 1860s Mississippi. The producers were insistent that no Black people appear in the show and Roddenberry argued with them so much about it that he was fired.

U.S.S. ENTERPRISE
NCC-1701

He sensed the world could be a better place through the example of television and believed that science fiction could lead the way, but Roddenberry struggled to get his new ideas off the ground. "Television was so tightly censored that science fiction was the only way to escape the taboos in politics, religion or anything else that was controversial," he said, per *Time* magazine. "I really don't consider myself a science-fiction writer, but I'm interested in what's happening on this planet and what may happen. In our society, we're treating man less and less like an individual and more like a social organism."

To take that next step, Roddenberry came up with *Star Trek* in March 1961. The next month, he registered that idea with the Writers Guild of America. The original concept for the show adapted all of his ideas to write about taboos and the present day through a sci-fi lens. This first iteration of *Star Trek* was set aboard the SS *Yorktown*, a massive starship with a multiracial crew, set in the 23rd century. From this simple 16-page pitch, history was made.

Roddenberry first offered *Star Trek* to MGM, but executives there passed. No one wanted to pay for science fiction. He then

This page, from top: Creator Gene Roddenberry didn't want the *Enterprise* to look like any other ship; Roddenberry previewed the second pilot at the World Science Fiction Convention, where it got a standing ovation; Lucille Ball originally thought the show was about traveling USO performers, but the star "stepped in and saved the day in a move that would've made every Starfleet captain proud," startrek.com wrote.

approached Desilu Studios—the production company run by Lucille Ball and her ex-husband Desi Arnaz. The company didn't set *Star Trek* into motion right away, but hired Roddenberry to develop pilots. He spent time on other shows, but when he pitched *Star Trek* again, Desilu was excited and immediately went to work selling the show. Executives took it to CBS who passed—because they were already developing *Lost in Space*—and then offered it to NBC. Thinking science fiction was still a bridge too far, Roddenberry downplayed those elements when he took it to NBC and played up the Western elements, pitching it as "*Wagon Train* to the stars!"

NBC commissioned a pilot for $600,000, but that was almost the end of *Star Trek*—before it even made it to the air. The pilot episode, called "The Cage," starred Jeffrey Hunter as the intrepid Capt. Pike of the starship *Enterprise* with Leonard Nimoy as the alien Spock.

The studio expected a space Western, but according to Roddenberry in his 1986 VHS introduction to the original pilot, "I delivered a very different kind of story, one which dealt with the strange dangers of illusion, the enormous power of imagination and the whole worlds that can come from people's heads. When some of the executives finally saw it, they were outraged and I can't say I really blame them. For the considerable money they put up, they certainly didn't get a Western space opera and nothing faintly like it."

The network was persuaded to order a second pilot, produced by Desilu Studios. Ball stood by the project, despite its initial failure, and Edwin Holly, an executive at the studio, told the authors of *Desilu: The Story of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz*, "If it were not for Lucy, there would be no *Star Trek* today."

Desilu produced the second pilot for half the cost of the first—the savings came from the fact the sets were already built. The show's star, Hunter, who was best known for his role in the John Wayne film *The Searchers*, decided he wanted nothing to do with the show, fearing it would hurt his movie career, and walked

This page, from top: Footage from the original pilot, "The Cage," was incorporated into the Season 1 two-part episode "The Menagerie"; Nimoy received sacks full of fan mail each week—more than any other cast member, including Shatner.

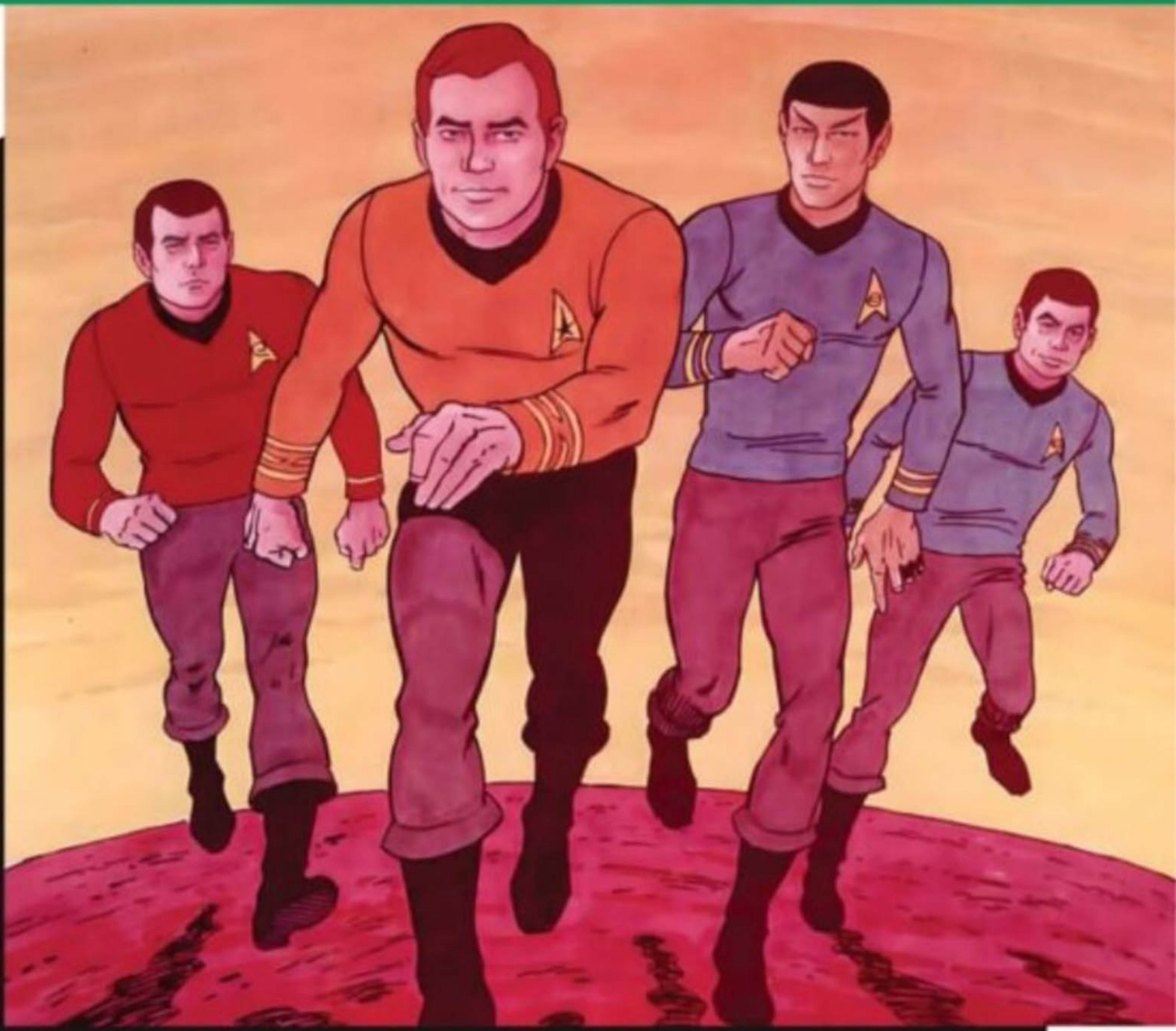
away from the role of Capt. Pike. Other actors, including Lloyd Bridges and Jack Lord, auditioned to become the captain, but the part ended up going to William Shatner, with a name change from Pike to Kirk.

James Doohan, a friend of the director, was cast as the chief engineer. George Takei (Sulu) was signed to help round out the crew and make it more multiracial. Nimoy came back as Mr. Spock and was the only crew member to return for the second pilot, titled "Where No Man Has Gone Before." According to Roddenberry, the fact that this new episode ended with a bare-knuckle fistfight between Kirk and the antagonist is what sold NBC on ordering a half-season of *Star Trek*, to be produced by Ball's company. With the half-season order, Roddenberry added Nichelle Nichols and DeForest Kelley to the cast as Uhura and McCoy, respectively—further adding to the diversity of the crew.

Production began and the series premiered on Sept. 8, 1966. Unfortunately, the ratings weren't stellar and Roddenberry immediately reached out to friends like authors Harlan Ellison (who wrote the *Star Trek* episode "The City on the Edge of Forever") and Isaac Asimov to begin a letter-writing campaign to keep the show on the air. Despite the lackluster ratings, NBC renewed the show for a full first season, as well as two more seasons, with the final episode airing on June 3, 1969.

Because it reached the three-season mark and had 79 episodes, the series was able to go into syndication. Throughout the 1970s, reruns of *Star Trek* made it a cult hit. A feature film was planned in 1975 but then cancelled. Executives at Paramount, who now owned *Star Trek*, decided to develop a new series called *Star Trek: Phase II*, but it was the box-office success of *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* in 1977 that led to the release of *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* two years later. It brought *Star Trek* to the big screen and gave the franchise a new life that it still lives today. 🖖

Clockwise from top: Roddenberry came up with the idea for the transporter when the full-size shuttle he'd wanted to use to transport the crew wasn't ready; Koenig (right) joined in Season 2, with his longer hairstyle designed to appeal to younger viewers; Nichols planned to quit *Star Trek* halfway through the first season but Martin Luther King Jr., who was a Trekkie, told her not to because she was setting an example of representation for Black women.



THE FIRST *TREK* SPINOFF: AN ANIMATED SERIES

With *Star Trek* going strong in syndication and the studios showing no interest in bringing it back in live-action form, show creator Gene Roddenberry turned to the world of Saturday morning cartoons to breathe new life into the classic series in 1973. Featuring 22 episodes across two seasons, *Star Trek: The Animated Series* brought back most of the cast and crew to reprise their roles, and it acts as a fourth season to the original show.

In animation, however, Roddenberry was able to expand the look and feel of the *Star Trek* Universe. Alien creatures and worlds were much easier and far cheaper to render in animation than they were in live-action, and it made everything feel more otherworldly and expansive. For fans of *Star Trek* thirsty for more, this was exactly what they needed in the time between *The Original Series* and the movies to come. *Star Trek: The Animated Series* was also the first *Star Trek* show to win an Emmy in any category, taking home the 1975 Emmy for Outstanding Entertainment Children's Series.

One of the biggest contributions to the *Star Trek* canon that *The Animated Series* made was introducing the holodeck, which would see substantial use in new shows going forward.

Though the episodes were shorter—more in line with the attention spans of kids and the dictates of Saturday morning programming—Roddenberry imbued these episodes with the same science-fiction wonder and hopeful future that the live-action series was predicated on. Though it was still aimed at children and included episodes that featured aliens like the tribbles and the amusement park planet from *The Original Series*, it didn't shy away from complicated topics. One episode even delved into the war crimes and genocide allegedly committed by Dr. "Bones" McCoy, with DeForest Kelley reprising his role.

THE BEST OF THE BEST

***The Original Series* gave us so many memorable performances as well as real-life issues to ponder and created a blueprint for the franchise. We're counting down the 10 best episodes.** By Pete Mele

10 | LET THAT BE YOUR LAST BATTLEFIELD

Season 3, Episode 15

Utilizing science fiction as a modified reflection of the times, this episode served up social commentary, legendary images (Frank Gorshin, near right, as a half-black, half-white humanoid) and the all-time greatest pronunciation of the word "sabotage." While the storyline is often criticized for lacking subtlety in its message about racism and slavery, the simplicity of the logic and clear consequences of its opposition make it an episode that remains a reminder of where we started and how far we have to go.

9 | THE ULTIMATE COMPUTER

Season 2, Episode 24

When a computer built by Richard Daystrom (William Marshall, far left) and programmed to think like a human chooses to put its own survival ahead of all others, Kirk (William Shatner, near left) must find a way to teach a computer regret. It's a testament to *Star Trek*'s writers that an episode from almost 60 years ago can be relevant to the conversations about artificial intelligence and Daystroms of today.

8 | SPACE SEED *Season 1, Episode 22*

Viewed through a modern lens, this episode is crude in many ways, but it is a seminal work for *Star Trek* that builds on the "Mary Sue" nature of Kirk (ie., too good to be true) and showcases the crew of the *Enterprise* as an unstoppable force. When Kirk and crew are faced with a ship full of superhumans, and pushed to the brink of death by a foe that is smarter, faster and stronger, they are still able to somehow come out on top. "It had an interesting concept and I was delighted it was offered to me," Ricardo Montalbán (left), who debuted as Khan, the leader of the superhumans, in this episode, said in the book *Captain's Logs: The Complete Trek Voyages*.

7 | THE CONSCIENCE OF THE KING

Season 1, Episode 14

Shakespeare has been a frequent motif in *Star Trek* and this early example is near perfect, balancing the tragic themes of *Hamlet* with a sci-fi take on justice and retribution. Scenes of playful courtship between Kirk and Leonore (Barbara Anderson, above left), the daughter of someone who may be a genocidal leader, are juxtaposed with an attempt to blow up Kirk's quarters with an overloading phaser. Writer and producer Ronald D. Moore tweeted that "The Conscience of the King" (the title comes from Act II of *Hamlet*) is "deeply underrated" and "one of the series' best."

6 | THE CORBOMITE MANEUVER

Season 1, Episode 11

In this episode, we are introduced to a defining chapter in Kirk's psyche, where when faced with an unbeatable foe, he bluffs and doubles down until he creates a winning scenario. Up against a mysterious alien (Clint Howard in his first of five appearances across the franchise), Kirk shows the ruthless side of his personality is bolstered by a love for exploration and relishing the joys in life.

5 | THE DOOMSDAY MACHINE

Season 2, Episode 6

Full of intrigue, thrills, social commentary and a healthy dose of everything turning out OK in the end, this episode is part indictment of nuclear weapons and part action movie. The episode features another defining feature of the *Star Trek* franchise: amazing guest actors. In this episode, it's William Windom as Commodore Matt Decker (below right), delivering overtures of Ahab and giving a reflection on the madness of revenge, while also delivering edge-of-your-seat suspense.

4 | THE DEVIL IN THE DARK

Season 1, Episode 25

Another episode with iconic shots that stick with the viewer long after it ends. What starts as a horror show then seamlessly morphs into a look on the other side of the us/them equation as Kirk and Co. encounter a murderous life form resembling molten lava that's terrorizing a mining colony. After Spock (Leonard Nimoy) mind melds with the creature, we're reminded to see past the foreign and look for ways to work in harmony and improve existence. The episode also marks the first time we hear McCoy (DeForest Kelley) utter his classic "I'm a doctor, not a..." line.

3 | THE MAN TRAP *Season 1, Episode 1*

The first episode to air but the sixth produced, the episode is part mystery, part alien horror and part environmental message as Kirk and McCoy beam down to a planet where one of the inhabitants (Jeanne Bal, above right) is not what she seems. "The Man Trap" stands on its own and doesn't explain many of the crew's relationships—as if it was eager to run and not walk into the future. All in all, an episode that sets the tone for the series and beyond.

2 | ARENA

Season 1, Episode 19

The picture in your mind of 1960s aliens likely comes from “Arena,” with a giant rubber lizard—a Gorn—throwing rocks at Kirk. In addition to that dated costuming, the episode sums up the core of *Star Trek*’s ethos and the duality of existence—we are human and we might jump to an emotional response, but we have the ability to learn and improve and maybe in 1,000 years, we will be even better. The Gorn are villains in the new season of *Strange New Worlds*, albeit with an updated CGI look.

1 | CITY ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER

Season 1, Episode 29

Harlan Ellison’s heart-wrenching script (with uncredited support from other *Star Trek* writers) shows us how much Kirk will personally risk to preserve the universe as we know it. Kirk’s character arc, and the support of Spock and McCoy, tell a story of love (with guest star Joan Collins, right), loss and perseverance that is difficult to capture in 50 minutes. This time-traveling episode does what *Star Trek* does best and speaks to the soul of existence, encompassing the good and bad. Despite the script taking 10 months and many revisions to perfect, *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry said shortly before his death that it was his favorite episode.

GONE BUT NOT FO

***Star Trek* came back again and again and again in a string of series—some more memorable than others.**

By Bryan Young

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION | 1987-1994

Set a century after the events of *The Original Series*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* was commissioned as a way to capitalize on the popularity of *Star Trek* without having to pay the salaries of the still-in-demand original cast. Despite concerns that it would eat into the box-office receipts of the original crew's theatrical movies that were still doing well, Paramount decided to move forward with the next generation and hire an all-new cast of relative unknowns.

Initially, Gene Roddenberry wasn't interested in getting involved, but after being shown early concepts for the show, he stepped back on board to helm the further adventures of the starship *Enterprise*.

The cast was headlined by Patrick Stewart as Capt. Jean-Luc Picard—in every way the opposite of William Shatner's Capt. Kirk. Surrounding him would be a diverse crew: strong-willed First Officer Riker (Jonathan Frakes), a Klingon (Worf, played by Michael Dorn), an android named Data (Brent Spiner), a half-Betazoid (Deanna Troi, played by Marina Sirtis), a blind engineer (LeVar Burton), and even a kid (Wil Wheaton) and his doctor mom (Gates McFadden).

Originally, there was an outcry from fans about replacing the original crew on a new series, with the always outspoken Shatner adding fuel to the fire. "To call a series *Star Trek* that doesn't have the cast and the ship in it is an error," he told *Starlog* magazine before the new series debuted. "The error seems to me to be overexposure of the *Star Trek* name and the possibility of not having the *Star Trek* quality we've become accustomed to."

But viewers quickly fell in love with *The Next Generation* and it became a smash hit, running for seven seasons and 178 episodes. The 90-minute series finale was watched by more than 30 million people in May 1994 and it spawned four big-screen movies. In 2023, the cast reunited for the critically acclaimed third season of the Paramount+ series *Picard*, proving their enduring chemistry.

RGOTTEN

LeVar Burton (far right), who played Geordi La Forge, struggled with his Visor prop, telling the BBC it was "pretty much a living hell" and gave him "a daily headache for about six years."

THE BEST EPISODES

▲ **THE MEASURE OF A MAN** (Season 2, Episode 9) dealt with Data's (Brent Spiner, right) humanity and saw Capt. Picard (Patrick Stewart, left) fighting in a courtroom over the life of his ensign and friend. Fraught with science-fiction dilemmas, it's some of the finest writing and drama in *Star Trek*'s history.

▲ **THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS** (Season 3, Episode 26 and Season 4, Episode 1) is a two-parter with one of the best cliffhangers in *Star Trek*. With Picard now Borg and Riker (Jonathan Frakes, left) in command of the *Enterprise*, how will he save the day and not kill his friend?

▼ **CAUSE AND EFFECT** (Season 5, Episode 18) featured guest star Kelsey Grammer (below) and showed the *Enterprise* caught in a time loop ending in destruction. The crew had to figure out how to get out of its loop and prevent an imminent disaster: sci-fi tension at its best.

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE | 1993-1999

While previous iterations of *Star Trek* series focused on the exploration of space, *Deep Space Nine* would take a different tack altogether. Set aboard a space station known as Deep Space Nine, the show would feature a new set of complications.

The station originally belonged to the Cardassians, as part of their brutal occupation of the planet Bajor. When the Bajorans were able to successfully rebel against their oppressors, they asked the Federation to take over what was then called Terok Nor. They sent Cmdr. Benjamin Sisko (Avery Brooks) to assume control of the station that would now be called Deep Space Nine. With a station in a fixed point in space on the frontier of the galaxy's Alpha Quadrant, the sort of stories they were able to tell varied greatly from the themes of exploration that were common for *The Original Series* and *The Next Generation*.

Over the course of the series, the Dominion War developed. With Deep Space Nine at the mouth of a stable wormhole that could connect the Alpha Quadrant to the Gamma Quadrant, it became a chief front in the war against the Jem'Hadar and the Changelings on the other side of the rift. Delving into the politics of war and families and the role of the Federation and Starfleet, *Deep Space Nine* was something wholly new and different, but it also carried forward the *Star Trek* Universe.

In addition to Brooks, the show starred Rene Auberjonois as the Changeling Odo, Alexander Siddig as chief medical officer Julian Bashir, Terry Farrell as Trill science officer Jadzia Dax, Colm Meaney as chief of operations Miles O'Brien and Armin Shimerman as Ferengi bar owner Quark. The series also boasted cameos from some of the biggest names in the franchise, including Stewart and Frakes. Though the show's seven seasons never rated as highly as its predecessors, many hail *Deep Space Nine* as the best of the *Star Trek* shows. At the time, *TV Guide* described it as "the best acted, written, produced and altogether finest [*Star Trek* series]."

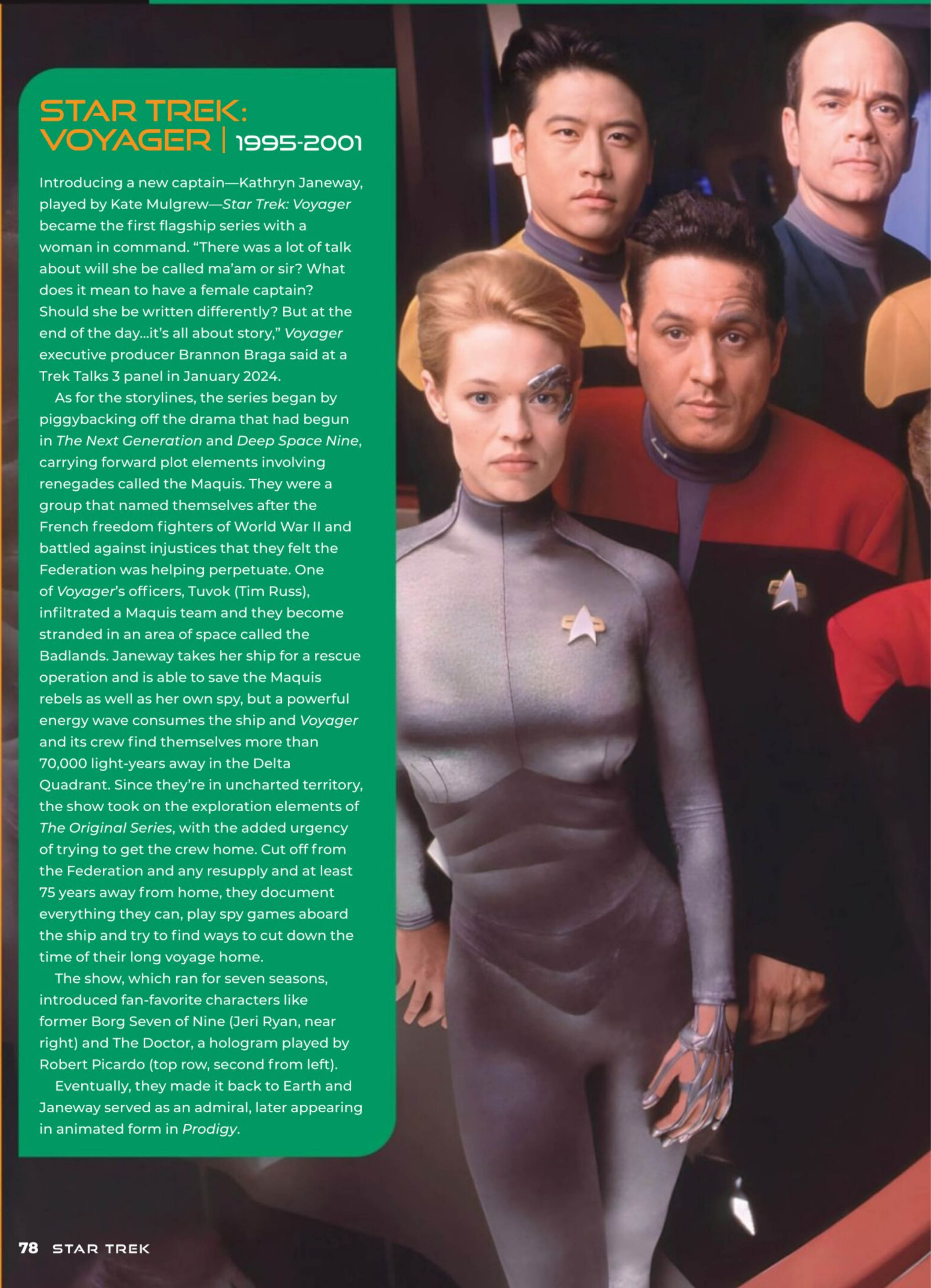
In 2022, *Star Trek: Lower Decks* featured a *Deep Space Nine* episode, with the return of the Ferengi Quark (bottom left). "Armin Shimerman can scream like nobody else in the world," showrunner Mike McMahan told Den of Geek about the actor.

THE BEST EPISODES

▲ **FAR BEYOND THE STARS** (Season 6, Episode 13) took Capt. Sisko (Avery Brooks, who also directed the episode) and the crew back to the 1950s, where they worked in a science-fiction magazine office. It's so far outside the box for *Deep Space Nine*, but so in keeping with what makes *Star Trek* great.

▲ **TRIALS AND TRIBBLE-ATIONS** (Season 5, Episode 6) was another time-travel episode where Sisko (left) and the crew had to infiltrate Capt. Kirk's *Enterprise*, cutting them into the classic episode "The Trouble With Tribbles." Tense and funny, this ep is an all-timer.

▲ **IT'S ONLY A PAPER MOON** On the road to the finale of *DS9* (itself deserving a spot on this list), "It's Only a Paper Moon" (Season 7, Episode 10) dealt with Nog (Aron Eisenberg, left), the first Ferengi in Starfleet. After being wounded, he gave in to his depression and retreated to the holosuite world of Vic Fontaine (James Darren), creating a poignant episode. It was directed by *Happy Days*' Anson Williams.



STAR TREK: VOYAGER | 1995-2001

Introducing a new captain—Kathryn Janeway, played by Kate Mulgrew—*Star Trek: Voyager* became the first flagship series with a woman in command. "There was a lot of talk about will she be called ma'am or sir? What does it mean to have a female captain? Should she be written differently? But at the end of the day…it's all about story," *Voyager* executive producer Brannon Braga said at a Trek Talks 3 panel in January 2024.

As for the storylines, the series began by piggybacking off the drama that had begun in *The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine*, carrying forward plot elements involving renegades called the Maquis. They were a group that named themselves after the French freedom fighters of World War II and battled against injustices that they felt the Federation was helping perpetuate. One of *Voyager*'s officers, Tuvok (Tim Russ), infiltrated a Maquis team and they become stranded in an area of space called the Badlands. Janeway takes her ship for a rescue operation and is able to save the Maquis rebels as well as her own spy, but a powerful energy wave consumes the ship and *Voyager* and its crew find themselves more than 70,000 light-years away in the Delta Quadrant. Since they're in uncharted territory, the show took on the exploration elements of *The Original Series*, with the added urgency of trying to get the crew home. Cut off from the Federation and any resupply and at least 75 years away from home, they document everything they can, play spy games aboard the ship and try to find ways to cut down the time of their long voyage home.

The show, which ran for seven seasons, introduced fan-favorite characters like former Borg Seven of Nine (Jeri Ryan, near right) and The Doctor, a hologram played by Robert Picardo (top row, second from left).

Eventually, they made it back to Earth and Janeway served as an admiral, later appearing in animated form in *Prodigy*.

Voyager, which aired on UPN, never achieved the same ratings as *The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine*, but it has a devoted fan base and rates better in syndication than *Enterprise*.

THE BEST EPISODES

▲ CARETAKER

The feature-length pilot for *Star Trek: Voyager*, "Caretaker" (Season 1, Episodes 1 and 2) created an exciting, if not haunting, backdrop for the rest of the show, tossing the entire ship and Capt. Janeway's (Kate Mulgrew, center) former allies turned enemies into the distant Delta Quadrant.

▲ THE SCORPION

(Season 3, Episode 26, and Season 4, Episode 1) saw the *Voyager* heading into Borg territory—and what they found and did there changed the landscape of *Star Trek* forever. This thrilling two-parter introduced fan-favorite Seven of Nine (Jeri Ryan, center) to the crew.

▲ TIMELESS

Set 15 years in the future and guest-starring Geordi La Forge (LeVar Burton, above) as a captain (he also directed the episode), "Timeless" (Season 5, Episode 6) sees members of the *Voyager* crew trying to alter time in the past to save the ship, showcasing the classic sci-fi dilemmas *Star Trek* does best.

STAR TREK: ENTERPRISE

2001-2005

This was the first prequel series in the world of *Star Trek*, turning back the clock a hundred years before *The Original Series*. It documents the crew of the *Enterprise NX-01*, the first Starfleet ship with the name.

This is Earth's first major foray into exploration across the galaxy and the captain chosen to lead the mission is Jonathan Archer. To play Archer, producers tapped Scott Bakula of *Quantum Leap* fame. Like other *Star Trek* shows, the plots focused on discovery, exploration and teamwork, but the world wasn't as idyllic as it would be in the future—humanity still had a lot to learn.

Rounding out the crew was T'Pol (Jolene Blalock), a Vulcan liaison; Trip Tucker (Connor Trinneer), a country-boy engineer; Hoshi Sato (Linda Park), a linguistics expert; and a Denobulan named Phlox (John Billingsley) as the ship's physician. As a prequel to *The Original Series*, the show focused on elements introducing first contact with aliens that would be familiar to audiences, while still giving the crew new and exciting stories of their own.

Controversially, the UPN show was canceled midway through production of its fourth season in 2005 and in the final scenes it was revealed that at least some part of it was recreated in a holodeck by William Riker from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, leaving audiences to wonder if any of it was real, or what really happened to the crew. Fans were upset by the series ending (even raising millions online for a fifth season), and it remains a beloved staple in the *Star Trek* family of shows.

Its early cancellation led to a dry spell for *Star Trek*, with no new episodes of a television series being produced until the 2017 debut of *Star Trek: Discovery*.

Scott Bakula (top row, center) said at a Trek Talks 2 event in 2023 that he'd be open to returning to the *Star Trek* franchise as Jonathan Archer: "I've been doing this too long to ever say never or no to anybody. I talk to everybody about stuff. So, sure."

THE BEST EPISODES

▲ BROKEN BOW

As the two-part premiere of *Star Trek: Enterprise*, "Broken Bow" (Season 1, Episodes 1 and 2) offered us a glimpse of humankind's first steps into the broader galaxy, above the protests of the Vulcans. The episodes introduced us to Jonathan Archer (Scott Bakula) and the crew of the *Enterprise NX-01* in stunning fashion.

▲ REGENERATION

(Season 2, Episode 23) is a tense episode that brought humanity its first contact with the Borg, leaving Archer, T'Pol (Jolene Blalock) and the rest of the crew to grapple with what that might mean for the future.

▲ TERRA PRIME

Guest-starring Peter Weller (center) as the leader of a xenophobic group, "Terra Prime" (Season 4, Episode 21) showed how the *Enterprise* crew used their ingenuity to deal with the terrorists. It's hailed as one of the best episodes of *Enterprise* for capturing a feeling of classic *Trek*.

Despite its success at the box office, Leonard Nimoy (seated) told Nerdist's Hero Complex show in 2012 that "there wasn't enough drama" in the first film and "it wasn't a *Star Trek* movie."

The franchise may have started on the small screen, but it was feature films that rocketed it to the next level.

By Bryan Young

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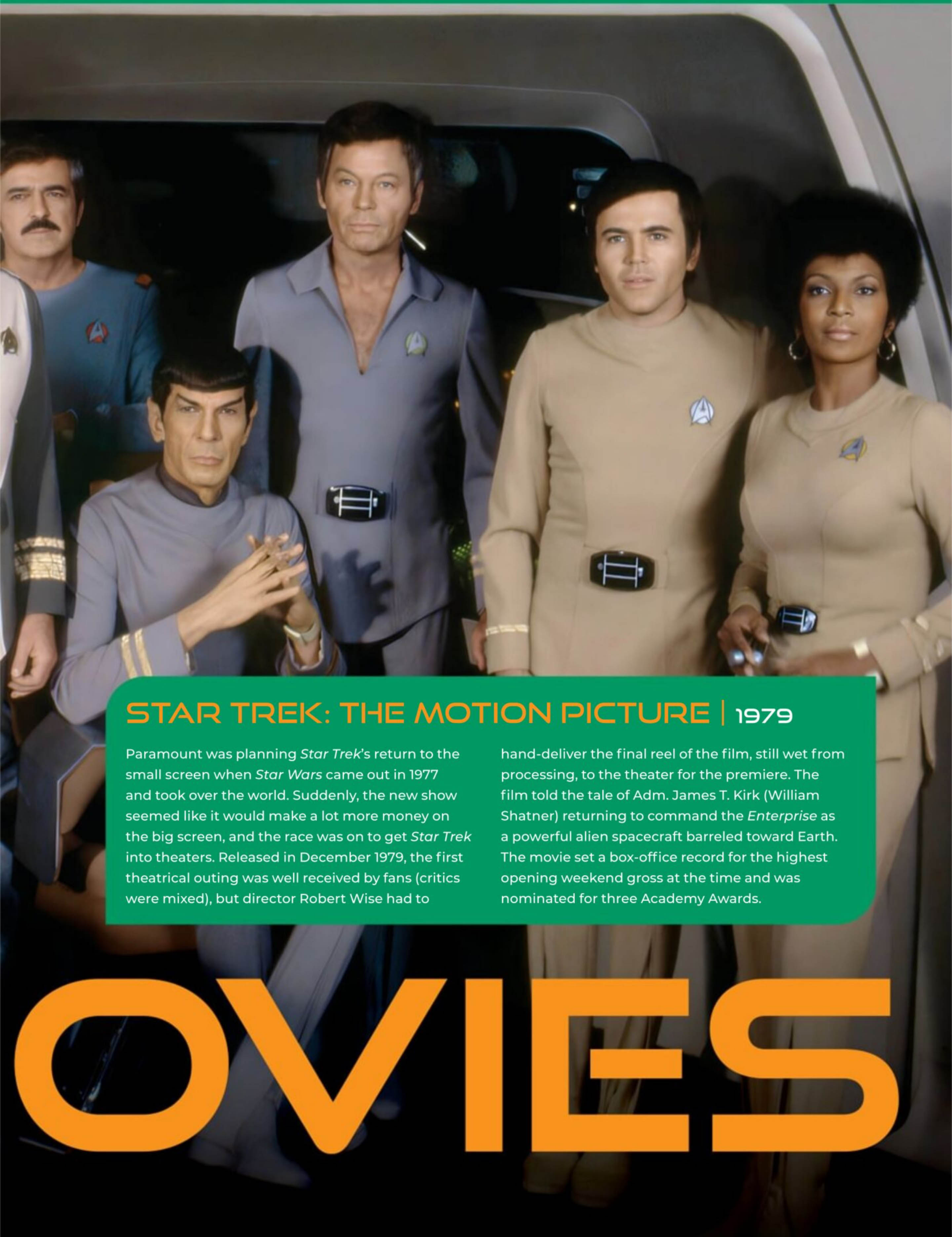


STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE | 1979

Paramount was planning *Star Trek*'s return to the small screen when *Star Wars* came out in 1977 and took over the world. Suddenly, the new show seemed like it would make a lot more money on the big screen, and the race was on to get *Star Trek* into theaters. Released in December 1979, the first theatrical outing was well received by fans (critics were mixed), but director Robert Wise had to hand-deliver the final reel of the film, still wet from processing, to the theater for the premiere. The film told the tale of Adm. James T. Kirk (William Shatner) returning to command the *Enterprise* as a powerful alien spacecraft barreled toward Earth. The movie set a box-office record for the highest opening weekend gross at the time and was nominated for three Academy Awards.

OVIES

STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN | 1982

Arguably the best film to come from the original cast, *Star Trek II* reunited the crew to deal with a returning threat to the galaxy. Ricardo Montalbán (seated) reprised his role from the show as Khan Noonien Singh, a genetic superman hellbent on revenge against Kirk for marooning him on a planet so many years ago. In the course of the story, Spock (Leonard Nimoy) sacrificed himself for his friends, creating a devastating ending for the movie. "A good story is a good story, and *Star Trek* relied on good stories," Shatner told an audience at a 2018 screening of the film. "*The Wrath of Khan* was enlarged to be on the big screen. Since we made it a film and gave it that bigness, what remains are the elements that made *Star Trek* so good, which was a good story and good characters."

STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK | 1984

Thanks to the Genesis device, Spock's body regenerated, and since the Vulcan had the forethought to implant his consciousness inside Dr. McCoy (DeForest Kelley, near right) the race was on to unite his body and his spirit. Unfortunately, the evil Klingon Kruge (Christopher Lloyd) was hot on their heels. The film is notable for showcasing the crew as an ensemble, something the previous films had lacked. "I'm very actor-oriented because of my background," Nimoy, who helmed the film, told the website DFC Intelligence about his directing style. "I believe very strongly that the actor is the person who has to give you the humanity of the film and I want to make films which are in touch with humanity."

STAR TREK IV: THE VOYAGE HOME | 1986

Capping off the trilogy of films that began with *Star Trek II*, *The Voyage Home* picks up after the destruction of the *Enterprise* and gives the crew an all-new dilemma. In order to save Earth, Kirk and the crew are forced to travel back to the 1980s and rescue a pair of humpback whales, which have become extinct in the future. Upon *The Voyage Home*'s release in 1986, film critic Roger Ebert hailed it as the best *Star Trek* movie. "This is easily the most absurd of the *Star Trek* stories—and yet, oddly enough, it is also the best, the funniest and the most enjoyable in simple human terms. I'm relieved that nothing like restraint or common sense stood in their way."

STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER | 1989

After two films in a row directed by Nimoy, Shatner slipped into the director's chair. The movie, cited as one of the worst *Trek* movies ever made, involves Spock's long-lost half-brother, Sybok (Laurence Luckinbill, near left), hijacking the *Enterprise* in a quest to find God. "We had fun and felt good about *IV*; that wasn't the case on *V*. I think on *V* we were smoking our own press releases," executive producer Ralph Winter reflected in a 2010 interview. "The combination of a story that was not working, it just wasn't commercial, [and] effects [that] were terrible—we almost killed the franchise; it almost died."

STAR TREK VI: THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY | 1991

To revive the film franchise, producers brought back *Star Trek II* director Nicolas Meyer. "A lot of people just thought after *Star Trek V*, this is all played out," Meyer said in a 2021 interview with trekmovie.com. But that proved not to be the case. Casting Christopher Plummer (left) as a Shakespeare-quoting Klingon villain, they essentially created an Agatha Christie-style mystery aboard the *Enterprise* with a backdrop of intergalactic political intrigue. In 2021, the website Looper hailed it as the best of the *Star Trek* films and, after watching it again, it's hard to argue with that assessment. As Looper wrote, "The movie ends the original series with great eloquence and poignancy, while at the same time suggesting that *Star Trek* will live forever."

STAR TREK: GENERATIONS | 1994

With the popularity of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* rising and the ages of the original *Star Trek* cast advancing, *Star Trek: Generations* brought both crews together in one movie, closing one chapter of *Star Trek* and opening another. In it, Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart, near right) and James Kirk come face-to-face to stop an evil scientist (Malcolm McDowell) bent on mass murder. Controversially, this was the film that saw the death of Capt. Kirk, resulting in death threats for McDowell, who confirmed as much in a 2011 interview with startrek.com. "It was the infancy of the internet, so it was easy to make a hollow threat. No one could check it, really. But, yes, that's what happened."

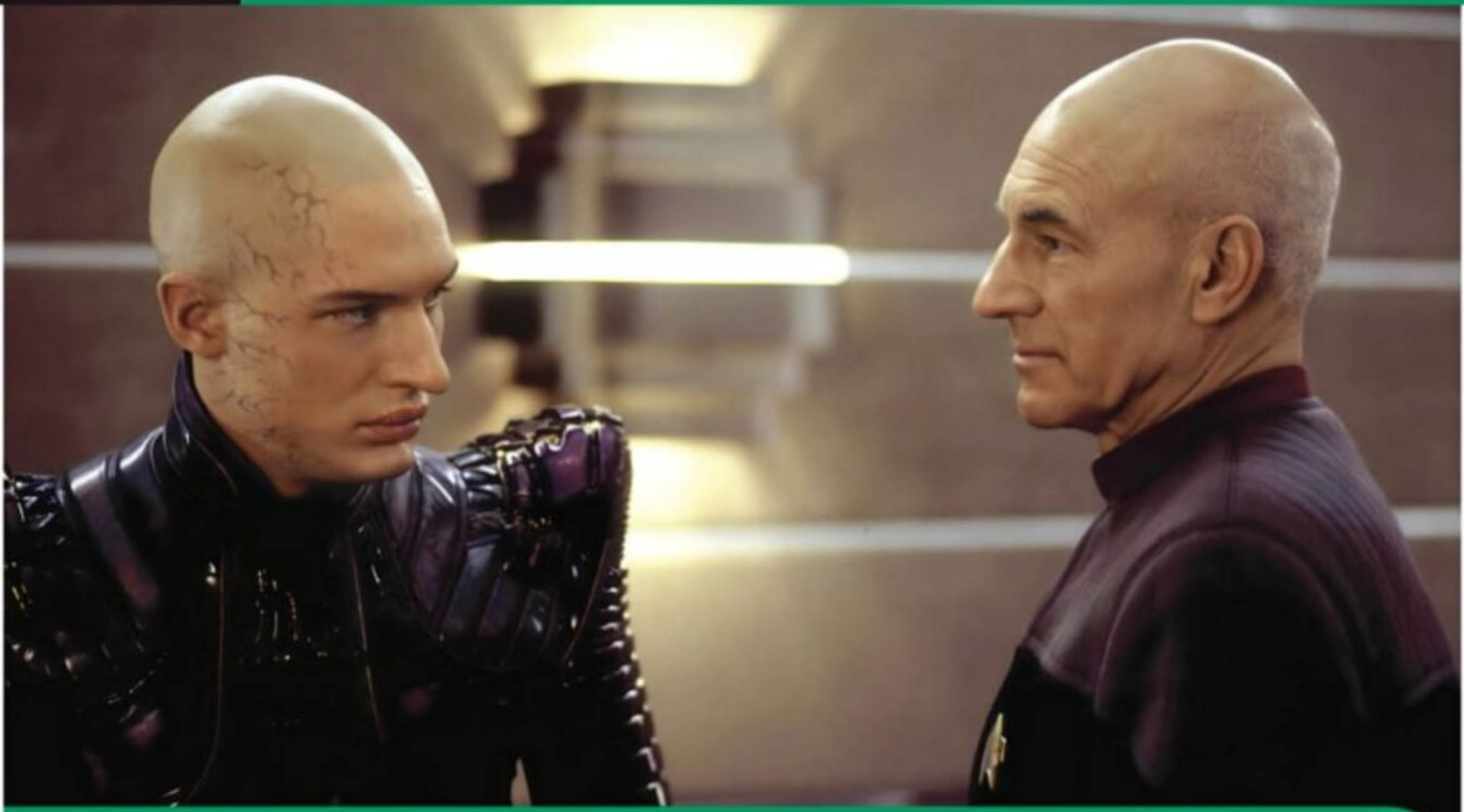
STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT | 1996

The first movie to star the cast of *The Next Generation* on their own, *First Contact* set the crew against the Borg. It was also the feature film directing debut of Jonathan Frakes, who played William Riker and had helmed eight episodes of the *Next Generation* series. Another time-travel plot, this film saw the *Enterprise* crew involved in the first contact between humanity and the Vulcans. Frakes looked back fondly on the double experience in a 2021 interview with Collider: "It was a bulletproof script from Brannon Braga and Ron Moore. And it was my first movie, and most successful movie, and it was filled with wonderful guest stars, and it was a great experience on both sides of the camera for me."

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION

1998

This movie is always spoken of as a contender for the worst *Star Trek* film. When asked by IGN in 2012 what went wrong with the film, actor/director Frakes said, point-blank, that the problem was the script, then added, "I don't think that an ideal society—the Ba'ku—should have been all blond people walking around in sandals." The plot revolved around an idealized society that was the subject of a mysterious conspiracy. The *Enterprise* crew discovered the conspiracy and worked against the Son'a (led by F. Murray Abraham) as well as Starfleet to undermine it.



STAR TREK: NEMESIS | 2002

The 10th film in the *Star Trek* series and the last for the crew of *The Next Generation* introduced a very young Tom Hardy (left) as the villain, a Romulan clone of Picard named Shinzon. In the film, Picard must deal with this clone and the threat of the Romulans against the Federation. In his review of *Nemesis*, Roger Ebert declared *Star Trek* dead. "I think it is time for *Star Trek* to make a mighty leap forward another 1,000 years into the future, to a time when starships do not look like rides in a 1970s amusement arcade, when aliens do not look like humans with funny foreheads and when wonder, astonishment and literacy are permitted back into the series. *Star Trek* was kind of terrific once, but now it is a copy of a copy of a copy."

STAR TREK | 2009

After the failure of *Nemesis*, which made $67 million against a $60 million budget, director J.J. Abrams was brought on board to inject new life into the franchise. Instead of going 1,000 years into the future, he went to the past and rebooted the original series. Casting Chris Pine (far left) as Kirk and Zachary Quinto (left) as Spock, the plot detailed how the *Enterprise* crew came together and dealt with a crisis from the future. With a cameo from Nimoy, this film created the alternate Kelvin timeline, where Starfleet and the Federation are more militaristic. The action-movie take on *Trek* worked, and it became the highest-grossing film in the franchise at the time, raking in $385 million.

STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS | 2013

Abrams returned to direct *Into Darkness* and offered up a new take on Khan—the bad guy from *Star Trek II*—by bringing him into this new, alternate timeline. Khan would be played by Benedict Cumberbatch (left), but reviews were mixed and fans voted it the worst *Trek* film of all time. Nevertheless, the movie made more than $467 million worldwide, setting a new record for the film franchise. In an interview with BuzzFeed in 2015, Abrams took responsibility for the lukewarm fan response to the movie, saying, “It was not anyone’s fault but mine, or, frankly, anyone’s problem but mine.... I found myself frustrated by my choices, and unable to hang my hat on an undeniable thread of the main story.”

STAR TREK BEYOND | 2016

The most recent *Star Trek* film was co-written by cast member Simon Pegg, who played the rebooted Montgomery Scott, and was directed by newcomer Justin Lin, who helmed films in the *Fast & Furious* franchise. The movie went back to *Trek*’s television roots, with the *Enterprise* seeking out strange new worlds—and all of the problems inherent with that. Pine explained the film’s premise quite elegantly to *FX* magazine: “The question that our movie poses is, Does the Federation mean anything? And in a world where everybody’s trying to kill each other all the time, it’s an important thing. Is working together important? Should we all go our separate ways? Does being united against something mean anything?” While well reviewed, *Star Trek Beyond* made $343.5 million at the box office, significantly less than the previous movie.

LOVE IN SPACE

The 10 best (and worst) couples on the big and small screen.

By Bryan Young

JAMES T. KIRK AND CAROL MARCUS

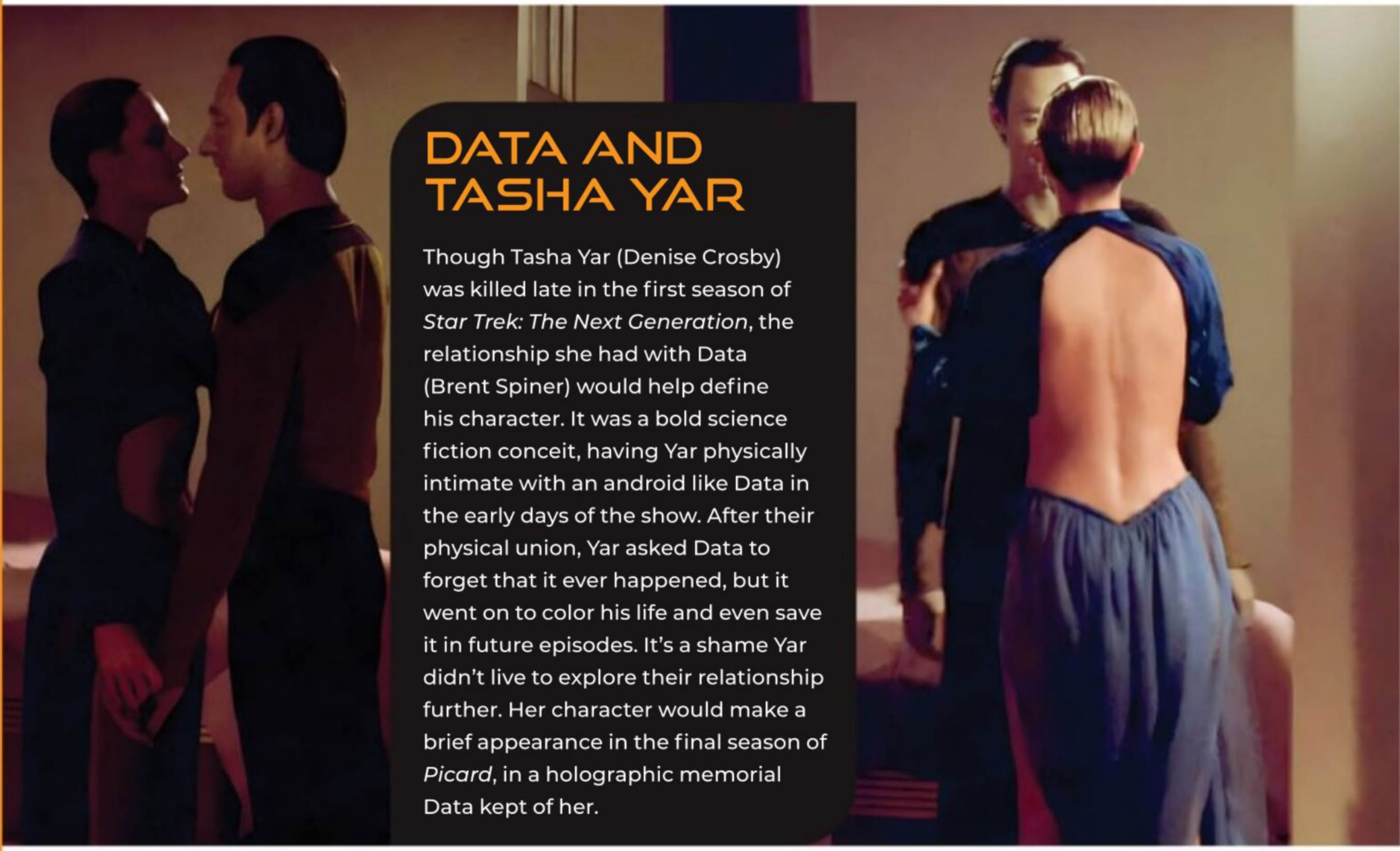
Our first hint of a real long-term relationship for James T. Kirk (William Shatner) came in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* when we met Carol Marcus (Bibi Besch), the scientist behind Project Genesis. Kirk and Marcus shared a son—David—but their careers drove them in different directions. When Carol asked to raise David on her own in the world of science, Kirk let her do it and continued to lead his cavalier life aboard a starship. Their relationship is one of the great failed romances depicted in *Star Trek*, and the death of their son (played by Merritt Butrick) in *Star Trek III* drove a wedge of prejudice deep into Kirk's heart that would not be easily forgotten. Alice Eve later portrayed Carol in 2013's *Into Darkness*, where she and Kelvin Kirk (Chris Pine) shared a frisson of attraction in a controversial scene where she stripped down to her underwear. But by the next film, she was gone and no longer serving as a science officer on the *Enterprise*.

JEAN-LUC PICARD AND BEVERLY CRUSHER

Capt. Picard (Patrick Stewart) was a stalwart captain of the *Enterprise*. He didn't like children and he struggled to let people get close to him. Picard's closest relationship came with Dr. Beverly Crusher (Gates McFadden) and it never quite flourished into romance until after the events of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. In the third season of *Star Trek: Picard*, we learned that Crusher secretly bore Picard a son named Jack (Ed Speleers) following their brief romance, but that led to all sorts of complications as the season progressed. This might be the worst romance on *Star Trek*, because it was so thoroughly hinted at, but never truly explored on-screen. Stewart told trekmovie.com that his Season 3 scenes with McFadden "are among my favorites because they were emotionally naked, both of them...and vulnerable. I don't think we'd ever seen both of them at the same time at that stage."

BENJAMIN SISKO AND KASIDY YATES

There's something endearing when the son of a single father plays matchmaker for his dad. For *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*'s Benjamin Sisko (Avery Brooks), his son Jake (Cirroc Lofton) introduced him to a freighter captain named Kasidy Yates (Penny Johnson) and the rest was history. They overcame the fact that she was a smuggler and he was a Starfleet officer and they married, though their wedded bliss wouldn't last. The couple had their ups and downs, but ultimately seeing their relationship play out added an extra thread to the stunning tapestry of the Dominion War. "The chemistry between Avery and I was uncanny," Johnson told *Star Trek Explorer*. "It was magnetic, because you had two seasoned actors who were both aware of that and who were both happily married.... A lot of the strength you saw translated on screen was the fact we resisted one another, and I think that was a great dynamic of the characters."



DATA AND TASHA YAR

Though Tasha Yar (Denise Crosby) was killed late in the first season of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, the relationship she had with Data (Brent Spiner) would help define his character. It was a bold science fiction conceit, having Yar physically intimate with an android like Data in the early days of the show. After their physical union, Yar asked Data to forget that it ever happened, but it went on to color his life and even save it in future episodes. It's a shame Yar didn't live to explore their relationship further. Her character would make a brief appearance in the final season of *Picard*, in a holographic memorial Data kept of her.

WILLIAM RIKER AND DEANNA TROI

William Riker (Jonathan Frakes) was the biggest womanizer on *Star Trek* since James T. Kirk, with plenty of one-off relationships with many different characters. His best friend, though, always remained Deanna Troi (Marina Sirtis). Though they flirted and maintained their friendship, their relationship didn't blossom until the *Next Gen* movies, when they finally became a couple. In *Picard*, we learned they lived "happily ever after" and shared two children, Thad and Kestra, but they had their problems. Only in the third season did they heal their wounds and resume a romance that would last the ages. Frakes told Syfy Wire that getting to reprise Riker and Troi's relationship in *Picard* "felt like a gift," adding that he and Sirtis "had both held onto a very specific story for these characters. We held it close to our hearts for many years.... It was very important, this relationship."

PAUL STAMETS AND HUGH CULBER

Star Trek: Discovery introduced science officer Paul Stamets (Anthony Rapp, right) and Dr. Hugh Culbur (Wilson Cruz, far right) and their complicated relationship became one of the great dramatic tools of the show. As the first openly gay couple with any significant and dedicated screen time on a *Star Trek* series, the peaks and valleys of their romance were a landmark for the future depicted in *Star Trek*. "It was really amazing how quickly our relationship was embraced," Rapp told the *Los Angeles Times*. Unfortunately, the course of true love never did run smoothly, and some small part of what kept audiences coming back to *Discovery* is the drama inherent in the relationship between these two, especially after Culber's death and return, and them having to rebuild their relationship from square one.

KEIKO AND MILES O'BRIEN

Perhaps the most wholesome couple in all of *Star Trek*, Keiko (Rosalind Chao) and Miles O'Brien (Colm Meaney) were glimpsed in *The Next Generation*, but flourished aboard Deep Space Nine. They had the normal ups and downs of any married couple, down to fights and squabbles, but were perfect role models for what an actual relationship ought to be like, with all of its many compromises. They were loving and supportive of each other and stuck together, even when their careers were pulling them in different directions.

B'ELANNA TORRES AND TOM PARIS

Though sparks flew over the first few seasons of *Star Trek: Voyager* between the half-Klingon-half-human B'Elanna Torres (Roxann Dawson) and the Starfleet reject turned helmsman Tom Paris (Robert Duncan McNeill), it wasn't until the fourth season of the show that they were able to get together. In a show that was ultimately about hope, the romance between Torres and Paris served as powerful subtext for that as they traveled through the Delta Quadrant, so far away from home, and were still able to find a family of their own. Their relationship remains one of the great *Star Trek* love stories. "I'd like to think she's still loving Tom and still battling it out with him, and trying to make the relationship and their family work," Dawson said in a 2011 interview with startrek.com.

Est. 2090
Sine Qua Non

TRIP TUCKER AND T'POL

The relationship between Vulcans and humans was frosty in the early days of human space exploration and the emotionlessness of T'Pol (Jolene Blalock) on *Star Trek: Enterprise* seemed to embody that iciness. As she grew more accustomed to the humans and the connections between the Vulcans and humanity grew, it was natural that she get involved with a crew member on the *Enterprise*—and who better than the arrogant and brash Trip Tucker (Connor Trinneer)? Together, they had some of the franchise's steamiest love scenes and perfectly complemented each other in their growth as people. "What I liked about it was that it was a complicated relationship and it was one where he was trying to find common ground where they could relate to one another. That's definitely kind of real life-ish," Trinneer said in the book *The Fifty-Year Mission*.

WORF AND JADZIA DAX

Perhaps the best and worst couple in the entirety of *Star Trek* canon is Worf (Michael Dorn) and Jadzia Dax (Terry Farrell). Best, because it felt so right and passionately lit up the screen in so many episodes of *Deep Space Nine*, from their brutal Klingon mating rituals all the way to their wedding, but worst because of how tragically it ended at the hands of Gul Dukat (Marc Alaimo). As a Klingon warrior and a practically immortal Trill, Worf and Jadzia began as an unlikely couple, but these star-crossed lovers etched a permanent place in the hearts of fans. The writers were inspired by the pair's chemistry on-screen. "They didn't really realize that it was going to be a big thing until she and I did our first scenes together," Dorn told trekmovie.com. "They went, 'Oh my god, we've got to put these people together!'"

A COMPLETE FAN GUIDE TO
STAR TREK III

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Why has *Star Trek* remained beloved by generations of fans for so many decades? "*Star Trek* says we exist 400 years from now, so there's hope. That's what the audience gets, is the hope," William Shatner (right, with Leonard Nimoy) told PeopleTV in 2021. "That's the message of *Star Trek*, and that's why I think *Star Trek* is popular."

> *STAR TREK* WILL ALWAYS WORK AS LONG AS YOU HAVE IMAGINATION."

STAR TREK CREATOR
GENE RODDENBERRY